

Creating Home Environments Where Children Thrive

Roselia Ramirez: Well hello everyone. I'd like to welcome you to the home visiting webinar series. This is the first webinar in our new year, we're very excited to be here. And we're happy that you have joined us today.

The topic for our session today is creating home environments where children thrive. Before we get started, let me tell you a little bit about who will be facilitating this conversation with you today. But I'm Roselia Ramirez and I am a senior training and technical assistant specialist at the National Center for Early Childhood Development Teaching and Learning. And I'm joining you today from my home in Arizona. And as I mentioned, I am very excited to be here with you today. And to welcome you to our series.

Let's move on here. And I'm going to tell you a little bit about these icons that you're going to see throughout the presentation as well as in the facilitators guide. We have included them on that first page again just to refresh your memory as to what they'll be referencing. We are excited to share with you that we have developed our series into segments that will be using to help shape the format as well as the flow of the home visiting series.

You're going to notice some specific graphics for each of those segments. In each of those webinars we will have either a mindful moment activity or what we're calling "It's all about You" segments. In some cases, like today, we have incorporated both. And then the segments are intended to focus on the importance of self-care and well-being. And then next we have focused on equity. Our intention is to weave this in throughout the session however, in some cases we may have a segment to highlight some key areas.

Some of the other ones that you'll see. These two little hands here. That is a try it out segment. And it's focused on implementing a practice or highlight, how to use a resource. For example, we may have a scenario for you to work through and reflect on. And then this is where your participants guide is going to come in handy. And then the small change, big impact segment. This is intended to incorporate considerations for children with disabilities or suspected delays as well as considerations for children who are dual language learners.

And then lastly, we have a segment called the bookcase. As you can see each letter in case has a meaning. The C stands for connect. The A for advanced vocabulary. The S for support engagement. And then the E for extend beyond the book. And then in this portion our intent there is to highlight resources to support you in building your own bookcase of professional resources or we will highlight children's books that you can share with families on your visits. And we'll be able to talk about the case letters and how they connect to your work with families.

OK so now that we have taken care of some general housekeeping let's go ahead and move forward here. The first thing that we have is we want to start off with a mindful moment. Let's start our time together just focusing and just clearing our minds, and just committing to this time that we have together.

Today I'd like to share a strategy with you that you can use to start your day. You could also share this with parents and families as a strategy to help them start their day with a purpose in mind. Starting the day with intentional motivation for everything that we not only think about, but things that we say. And can do. This changes the brains perspective, and it makes a connection to our unconscious, which oversees most of our decision making as well as our behaviors. This strategy is intended to align and make that connection in our brain, making it more likely that our words as well as our actions and our responses, especially during difficult moments will be more mindful as well as compassionate.

You can join me and do this as we're sitting here wherever you are, whatever space you're in. We want to practice this first thing in the morning. We're just going to walk through it so that you can get an idea as to what this might look like. It could be like when you first get up in the morning, you want to sit up in your bed or maybe you sit up at your table, just somewhere where you can be in a relaxed posture.

You want to make sure that you're sitting up straight, but you don't want to be rigid. It's encouraged that you close your eyes. And you start to make a connection with your seated body. And then you want to move into taking at least three long deep breaths, breathing in through your nose and then out through your mouth. And then as you're doing that you want to feel your chest, and your belly as you're breathing in and out. These are really intentional deep breaths that you're taking. And then as you take each breath you should hopefully start to feel more relaxed.

And you want to start to ask yourself, you had a conversation with yourself, what is my intention for today? And then as you think about you know the people, the different activities that you have planned for the day, you can ask yourself questions such as how might I show up today to have the best impact? What do I need to take better care of myself? And then also maybe perhaps maybe during difficult moments how might I be more compassionate to others as well as myself?

These are just some questions that some conversations, reflections, that you can have with yourself as you're doing these breathing exercises. This process will help you to set your intention for the day, focusing on what is important to you. For example, today I will be kind to myself. I will be patient with others. I will stay grounded. I will persevere. And most importantly I will have fun. Throughout the day you want to be intentional and checking in with yourself and then taking some breaths and revisiting that intention that you have set for yourself for that day.

Notice that as you become more conscious of your intentions for each day, the quality of your communication, your relationships and your mood will begin to shift. And then you'll just see that it's just something to help you get through the day and just really stay focused on things that are important to you. With that said, this is just one strategy. We know that there are many others that folks might use.

What are some mindful moment strategies that you might use to begin your day? If you would share those with us in the Q&A, that would be great. As you guys are doing that, I'm going to share with you our learning objectives for our session today.

For this session we have identified two learning outcomes. First by the end of this session we anticipate that you'll be able to describe and share with families the importance of positive home environments, and how they impact children's growth, development as well as their learning. Next, that you will be able to implement some practical strategies during home visits that support positive home environments.

With that said, I think that we should start with getting some insight in terms of what are participants. I do believe that my colleague Joyce has joined us. Joyce, would you like to say hello?

Joyce Escorcia: Hey everyone. We wanted to get started just by asking a question what do you think are the most significant elements of the environment for young learners? What do you think is important? And I just processed a little poll up here. So that you can respond. And I do think it's about the materials and the equipment. Do you think it's about the space and design? Do you think it's about routines and activities? Or do you think it's about the meaningful interactions that adult child and that child's child interactions? For you, what do you think is most important?

And I see that meaningful interactions and adult child and the child's child interactions that that was our big winner. And in keeping that in mind we're going to dig into that a little bit more. And we want to start looking at what the research says when it comes to the environment. There's a couple of things that we really want to point out about this. There's a lot of research, there's a lot of info out there. We just want to find out a few things too during our time together.

And first that the environment really needs to be engaging and predictable. And we're going to spend some time talking about that during our time together today. Next it says that environment where children thrive is characterized by the ongoing, positive, adult-child and child-child interaction. That it's those moments and those interactions that are really necessary to firm out children's social and emotional development. You guys were right on with that poll. We're going to talk about that just a little bit more.

In that poll that we just did, a lot of you responded that interactions are really a valuable part of the environment. The question is how can you as a home visitor, support family's that have interactions that make for positive differences within other children's lives. What can we do, how can we partner with parents, how can we be that support? And most of us agree that people and interactions are really their most important elements in a learning environment. But let's think about what kind of interactions are we talking about? Like interactions can mean a lot of different things.

To define what we're referring to as interactions those are those interactions that are meaningful to children and adults, and interactions where they have that genuine interest and just care for the child and what's happening in that environment. That sounds really easy to say, but the question is how do we do it? The visual that you see outlines this process. And we're going to talk a little bit about today. That the present, that connecting and then extend learning. We're going to talk a little bit more about that.

The first step of this process is for adults just to be present with the child. And we talked about being present, it just really means focusing in on the child. Being tuned in to what the child is doing, what they're saying, what they're not saying, what they're feeling. Just to be really present and in the moment. Let's think about what this means from the perspective of as your role as a home visitor. Or if you're someone that's supporting a home visitor, what does that mean for the home visitors that you're supporting?

Think about, we invite you to light up that Q&A box again for us. Think about how could you support this process of being present in connection for families? And also what does this mean developing your own relationship with a parent and child? Because the work that we do very much parallels. The way that a lot of the strategies that we share with parents to support their children are a lot of the same things that parallel process and the way that we interacted are present with our families as well.

In that Q&A box I'm going to ask you to put your thoughts in there, about how you could support that process of connection for families with their children and also thinking about your own connections and being present with family? While you're putting that in there ... Such as being there and being present. Modeling that process. Having clear outlines and expectations. And see what we're going to be talking about because all of those things are right.

All of those things are so important. We know what we know about our children and families is, is that what we really know about the child, our own temperament, their preference, their interests, their cultures, their language. All of those things are part of just being present. Getting to know who they are. You know that we can be intentional in choosing what we say, what we do, how we do it. And that that really helped us be the most effective. Continue to think about that. Like being present, now think about connecting. And we think about connecting, connecting to things. Observing what's interesting and what's significant. What's important about what the child is doing. What are they saying. What are they not saying? What are their actions conveying? It really needs like letting the child know that we see them and that we're interested and what they're doing.

And that we want to spend some time with them. We really want to be in that moment. And that's really what we mean when we talk about connections. And as a home visitor, this is something that we can model during our home visit and really talk with our parents and families about what we're doing and why. And sometimes just understanding all of that can really be important for parents and families.

We've talked about being present, we've talked about connecting. Now let's talk a little bit about extended learning. We're thinking about extended learning, it just means making some of those teachable moments that happen during routine care and throughout the day. That's what we're talking about when we say extended learning. And there are a lot of different ways that do that and approach that and support that as a home visitor.

Now we're thinking about we can model and encourage the use of open-ended questions for parents. Again, we can talk about model offerings, supporting parents and offering work materials and how we incorporate things like labels within the home. Reminding parents that a lot of those techniques and the things that they can do is just simple connections that they can

make throughout the day. Maybe it is just about thinking about to develop those meaningful interactions that home visitors and families need to be completely present, focusing on the child's connecting and really carefully observing what that child is interested in and what they're trying to tell us. What they're doing and what they're thinking. And really just make the best out of these teachable moments that's happened throughout the day. Now we're going to reflect on this a little bit more, Roselia is going to take it from here.

Roselia: As Joyce mentioned the first step in meaningful interactions as being present. We need to be present when we interact with both adults as well as with children. Let's talk about a few considerations that could help you as a home visitor to support families to be tuned in and to be present.

The first thing is what we're calling quiet the static. And so static, this refers to those mental distractions that keep us from being present to what is happening in that moment. I don't know about you guys, but I know there's oftentimes when my mind can be going a million miles a minute. These can really be distracting from being present in what is happening in that moment. Quieting the static refers to pausing to fully be in the moment and not focusing on what was happening before or what needs to be done later.

When home visitors pause with families and talk with families about pausing with children, it helps everyone focus and to give full attention. During the home visit we can model this for parents. And again, those mindful moments are a great strategy to help with that. If you find yourself going from home visit to home visit maybe before each visit just pausing and clearing your mind so that you can walk into that next visit with a clean slate so to speak.

And then the next thing here is focus and clear your mind. This is part of quieting the static. In our mindful moment we share the strategy of setting your intentions for the day. And then taking some deep breaths. We also talked about revisiting your intentions throughout the day and how this can help you to stay focused on that task at hand. This is the strategy that you can share with families to help them to be present with their child during the day, and particularly when things can feel challenging and overwhelming for parents. I mean I know we've all been there where we're just overwhelmed and so just pausing, taking a deep breath, to just help you to be present in that moment.

Let's pause here for a moment and let's hear from you again. What are some of those techniques that you use to be present when you are interacting with others? This could be with your co-workers, this could be with family members, this could be what we were talking about. Some techniques that you used to be present as you're moving from home visit to home visit? We ask that you share your responses in the Q&A. and then you can also jot down some of these strategies in your participants guide.

I'm going to keep us moving forward as you guys are sharing some of those techniques that you utilized to help you stay focused. The next thing we want to talk about is think and prepare. This is part of quieting the static. It's that intentional thinking about and preparing how to make an interaction successful. An example of and how this might look is talking through and providing parents with resources as they're thinking through those opportunities to embed learning into interactions throughout the day.

And then next we have being aware of your feelings. This is an important part of quieting the static. It begins with how intentional we are with our words and our actions. And home visitors can support parents by helping them understand how their feelings can greatly impact the quality of the interactions and how being fully present with their child in that moment. What are some techniques that you saw that might have come through in the chat box Joyce?

Joyce: Yeah, lots of great things coming through in the Q&A. Things like just sitting and listening to some music between visits, taking a drink of water. One that I was thinking of that I saw Laura put up in the Q&A which is putting down your phone and your device. That was another one. Carrying a notebook in every visit, just jotting down some of the things that were shared. Manage to share that. While you're there, processing and being present. Just sitting in silence was another great one that I saw. Take a moment and centering yourself in the quiet. And ...

Roselia: A lot of good things.

Joyce: Yes definitely.

Roselia: All right, well thanks everyone for sharing. Just a few more things that we want to talk about here when we're talking about supporting families to be present.

The next thing is adjust to the child or adult. This is really about considering a child or the adults temperament, their presence, their interests. And then making adjustments to meet those needs. This is also sometimes referred to as goodness of fit.

Let's talk a little bit more about what we mean by goodness of fit. It's really important that as a home visitor that you feel that there is a match between the demands and the expectations of the environment that you were supporting. If you're feeling that you're not a good fit for a family for instance, you want to make sure that you're having discussions with your home base supervisor during that reflective practice time that the two of you have set aside. This really creates an opportunity to seek support as well as professional development opportunities. Because we know that caseload reassignment may not always be possible.

The other thing with that is that it doesn't have to be the only solution. Taking that reflective time to dive into what are some of the dynamics that are happening, that perhaps has you feeling that you're not a good fit. Utilizing that time is a great strategy to talk through those things.

All right, there are two more things that we want to discuss and so one is preferences and interests. We do know that these can affect reactions to children and adults. It becomes important to understand our own preferences and interests as well as our own likes and dislikes. And then we also want to mention culture and language. As home visitors it's really important that we understand ourselves. This includes our beliefs, our own attitudes. And these are attitudes that we may have about certain things as well as assumptions and expectations. This process will be a starting place for building relationships with adults and children whose cultures and languages may be different from our own.

And then lastly, we do want you to remember that you have resources such as coaches, reflective supervision as well as your colleagues to lean on to discuss ways that you can support families to be present.

Joyce: Now we just want to review a little bit about what connecting with children means. We've talked about quite a few things, shared a lot of strategies back and forth. Visitors and families can really connect with the child by observing what the child likes and thinks and often the child is aware of what the interests of the adults are, what's the family, what are they interested in and sharing that even as a home visitor. Share what some of those interests are just some things to think about there.

But it's also important to remember that connecting with children can really look different depending on the culture and the family value in that household. To ensure positive connection with home visitors and families observe and things to think about is how using a positive relationship between the parents and the child contributes to learning. It really is about that foundation, that relationship. About how consciously deciding how to connect by individualizing or support really contributes to learning. And also, about how respecting the child's rights to say no, and to follow their lead. And interests really contributes to their learning and their development as well.

But all those things that happen naturally are all a part of learning. And that, as home visitors you should support parents by making some suggestions as they work on making those connections. And it can be a lot of the things that we've already mentioned in the chat that have come up. Slowing down, staying in the moment, that came up quite a bit in the Q&A here. Keeping learning about the child and their development. Listening to the child and whether it's listening with our ears or even listening with our eyes as far as what are some of those non-verbal cues as well. Personalize those interactions always showing respect and when we're thinking about behavior and the things that we want to support them in.

And another factor that might affect how we as home visitors connect with families and children, and so we're going to talk a little bit more about that in just a few minutes. Roselia is going to dig into that a bit.

Now we want to take just a little bit more time and talk about just different ways to be present and we want to do that by pushing into our next segment, which is really about taking care of yourself first. Taking care of you first.

We've talked about the importance of being present, making the connections. And now we want to continue that conversation about the importance of you. And again, this is just another strategy ... It's also maybe something you can share with families that you're supporting as well. Here's [Inaudible]

It says the difference between effective and ineffective moments working with young children is often caused by our social emotional health and general well-being. Basically, it's saying that it starts with us. That this statement right here, what you see on this screen here really brings to life the importance of taking care of oneself first, in partner with parents to understand our own social emotional health and general well-being that impacts the ability to be fully present. [Inaudible] impact our ability as home visitors to be fully present and caring families.

Again thinking about that process that with our families to encourage them to take care of themselves as well as they are [Inaudible] We shared one strategy just a little bit earlier to set the stage for our time together and help us and feel better and more ready support and just do

the do, do what we do on a daily basis. And want to invite you to continue sharing in the Q&A what are some other ways that you're intentional about taking care of yourself. And can you pop those into the Q&A and we'll pull some of those out as well.

And I know I pick up some things that I've gone back to when we were in quarantine. I picked up some things and maybe I did even as a teenager. Maybe puzzles, and so I wanted to know the things that you continue to carry forward to take of yourself. And as those are popping up in the Q&A, Angela says that she likes massages. Whatever it is that's really just about you. Diet and exercise, all of those great things. I know. That's one of my goals now is to really focus on my own ...

The Q&A, we just want to keep the conversation going and think about how we can be more intentional about taking care of ourselves. And as well as supporting parents to do the same for themselves. Especially now that we're in person. It's more important now more than ever. We have so many different things coming at us. To really keep ourselves a priority. And there's a saying, and it's just human nature. You know it's easier to pay attention to negative things in our lives and pay less attention to the positive. Especially when we're feeling stress, whether it's work, whether it's something in our personal life.

But I read the saying when we were prepping for today and it said, "Velcro for the bad and Teflon for the good." And that just means that you have to really work hard, have that mindset to pay more attention to the good. A lot of times that the bad stuff just sticks easier. It's easier to think about the bad, the challenges. And sometimes that Teflon tends to slide away and slide to the back. We really have to be intentional about today I choose gratitude. Today I choose to focus on the good things that happened. Because when we focus on those good things, those positive things, our body's are more rested, more relaxed. It really creates less wear and tear on our bodies, on our minds and it really increases our health and wellness.

One idea to consider, we just wanted to share with you today is to think about maybe a gratitude journal. In your viewer's guide, you have a place there to jot down some notes and just thinking about, describe a routine of gratitude as a personal practice. But also maybe one that you could share with families. You want to jot that down. What's one way that you practice gratitude in your life? And you can journal this. At different times in my life I've had a gratitude journal. OK, I'm just going to start documenting the good things. The things that I'm thankful for.

If you want to jot that down in your participant guide or if you want to share in the Q&A whatever you're most comfortable with, and as we're thinking about that gratitude journal, again think about it on your own. Also thinking about it as a strategy you share with families as well. That for families it should be that they could develop like a gratitude circle or a journal so they could journal with their child, it's a great way to end the day, or even the home visit. It helps shift the thinking.

It could be that maybe there's a young child and they can draw a picture. And then the family member can capture feelings and even they could picture. And that really creates one kind of that moment of gratitude that they had together. But also really create like a great memory and

great book and something to carry forward. That's just one idea there. And now I'm going to ... Roselia I think you're going to keep the conversation going a bit.

Roselia: Yeah earlier we – as Joyce mentioned, we did mention adult biases. We're going to explore this a little bit more. One essential aspect of creating home environments where children thrive is identifying those biases and the role that they play with our interactions with children and families. We do know that this is the topic that we could do a whole day session on.

We just want for you to begin to think about the role that biases have in your role as you support families. What do we mean when we say biased. It's a tongue twister word. A bias is -- it's defined as attitudes or stereotypes that favor one group over another. We all have them as we all hold our own subjective world views. And these have an influence in shaped by things such as our culture, our beliefs, what we value, our personal experiences. And there could be direct or indirect influences from society.

Biases can be explicit or they could be implicit. Let's start with what we mean by an explicit bias. These are conscious. And I really want to emphasize that word conscious. These are the conscious beliefs and stereotypes that affect one's understanding, one's actions as well as one's decisions. And then we have implicit bias. And these also effect one's understanding, actions and decisions but in an unconscious manner. That's the difference there.

One is conscious and then one is unconscious. They reflect an individuals socialization and experiences within broader systemic structures that work to perpetuate existing systems of privilege and oppression. These implicit associations begin early, and they develop over a lifetime. And they're experienced through exposure to direct as well as indirect messages that can become internalized. This is when a person believes that the stereotypes and the misinformation that they hear are true about themselves.

Now I said this earlier, we all have them. And it's important to know that biases will manifest in our interactions, in experiences that we have in different settings. They can also create barriers to children's sense of identity as well as their feelings of belonging. And then biases can interfere with developing positive relationships with parents, with families, which can then negatively impact the services that home visitors provide. As well as the families' outcomes. As home visitors it's important that we take an anti-biased approach in our practices and how we interact with families. Let's explore how we might do this and what it could look like.

All right. An anti-biased approach in our practices and how we interact with families really begins with having an equity lens. This will help us to become more aware of the biases as well as discrimination. An equity lens is a set of questions that we can ask ourselves when we're planning, developing and evaluating a policy program, practice or even a service. The questions, they really are intended to help us to determine barriers and identify as well as measure and evaluate best practices.

Here's an example. Before each home visit, a home visitor may ask themselves questions about how they intend to engage with the parents as well as other adults that may be in the home. And then also think about who needs to be included in any of the decisions about a child or a family. In a nutshell. An equity lens helps us to interrupt biases. We're interpreting them but

we're also intentionally reflecting and planning. An equity lens helps to increase transparency and accountability. And to shift historic institutional patterns.

All right. Now we're going to direct you to your participant's guide. Hopefully you have that handy. We also invite you to share your reflections in the Q&A. if you would like to do that. Here's what we're going to do. In your participant's guide we want you to explore this question. In what ways can an equity lens influence how I facilitate families in creating meaningful interactions and effective environments where their child can thrive. Again, think about that for a moment and we encourage you to jot down your reflections in your participants guide or you can share those in the Q&A. Joyce while participants are sharing, I was wondering if you have an example on how an equity lens has helped you?

Joyce: I do. I was thinking about this question and think it opens you up to ...For me, it makes me realize that the world is so much bigger. And there's so many different ways to be right. Different families I've been able to work with and support have really been intentional about equity lens and there's different ways to be right.

Families and other people that they have their own beliefs, and their own ways of doing and being. And there's a lot that we can learn from each other. I know that whenever I've just been open to that and open to see that hey, my way of believing isn't always the only right way. There's a whole bunch right about it. And I know it's really put me in a place to learn more about myself and learn more about the families [Inaudible]

Roselia: Awesome. That's a great – great example.

Joyce: While you guys are continuing to drop things in the Q&A, we want to spend some time looking at some practical settings that you can use during home visits to support a positive home environment. We know that young children learn best when they can play and explore their environment, with the health and the assistance of caring and supportive adults.

One of the main goals of a home-based program is to support parents in using home or the physical environment as the learning environment. One strategy is you can support this process by exploring the parents use of materials found in the home. That could be plastic containers or pots and pans, noisemaking in my house as it turned into instruments slightly with my little one. Or empty shoe and tissue boxes is [Inaudible]

Really the thing to think about is like that everything that's needed is right there. And we just want to keep hearing from you that what are other ways that you suggest materials found in the home to support learning? We're going to invite you to put your ideas in the Q&A as well.

And what are some great ideas and great ways for you to facilitate that conversation for using those materials from home? And, for me it's really been the thing for me and things in my house with my child everything is an instrument these days, you know for us. There's a spoon or pot or a lid, it doesn't really matter. But everything's got a beat. What we're doing right now.

Roselia: Oh absolutely.

Joyce: While there's kind of keep those ideas coming in the Q&A. We also want to show you a video. Show you a video of what this could look like within the home. We're going to look at a video clip of a home visitor using items during a home visit, using items found within the home.

And in your participants guide you have a place to jot down some notes for this video as well. While you're watching the video, just think about what's going on. What materials are they using, how they are using them, how is that supporting that child's learning? I'm going to pop the video up here. And then we're going to talk about it. Just a couple of minutes.

[Video begins]

Woman #1: Oh you want to try

Woman #2: Oh you want to try it too?

Child: Yeah.

Woman #2: Yeah.

Woman #1: Your turn mommy.

Woman #2: My turn?

Woman #1: Your turn.

Woman #2: OK.

Child: One, two, three.

Woman #1: Continue counting. That is ... –

Woman #2: Number one.

Child: One. Two.

Woman #2: Number one. What else Natalie? What's after one? Two.

Child: Two.

Woman #2: Two. One, two, three. Uh oh.

Child: One, two, three.

Woman #2: Three. Four.

Woman #1: Hm, one left. One box left. Going to put it on top?

Woman #2: Five.

Woman #1: You did it.

Child: Yay.

Woman #2: One, two, three, four, five.

Woman #1: Five.

Woman #2: Six.

Woman #1: That's a long line.

Woman #2: One, two. One more time.

Woman #1: Are we done with the box?

Woman #2: We need to clean up then.

Woman #1: You can start cleaning up the boxes.

Woman #2: Clean up.

Woman #1: Yeah, it's your turn to clean. Clean up, clean up, clean up.

Woman #1 and Woman #2: Everybody everywhere. Clean up, clean up, clean up, everybody everywhere.

Woman #1: One more. You did it Natalie. You put all the boxes away.

[Video ends]

Joyce: There just be thinking about what are some of the things that you felt happening. What were some of the learning moments that you saw right there in action. And pop those into the Q&A as well as Roselia keeps our conversation going. Get us thinking about how we support parents with some of those everyday materials and what [Inaudible]

Roselia: Yeah I really love that video. And just how they utilized materials that can be found within the home for such wonderful activity. So many learning opportunities. As well as opportunities for some rich language development. And we all know that children love empty boxes, and it really gets their imagination working.

Let's move on to another strategy. Another way that home visitors can support parents in creating an environment where children can thrive is to help them develop and maintain a predictable schedule and routine for the child. Just like adults children, they feel more confident and secure when their daily activities are predictable and familiar to them. By establishing a schedule, you develop a routine. And routines are crucial for supporting behavior in those early years. A schedule that is used consistently provides children with a sense of security because they know what's happening and what's going to happen next.

You know as home visitors we can work with parents to keep schedules simple and to look for ways to embed learning opportunities into activities that they're already going to be doing within that day. Parents can refer to the schedule often and then post it somewhere, such as a refrigerator maybe. Where a child could see it and perhaps interact with it to help with some of those transitions if they're having difficulty getting through the day.

The example that you see on the image here is one obviously for a center, but could easily be adapted for a home setting. If anyone has an example of a schedule that they helped a parent develop for a home setting. That'd be great if you could share that in the chat box. Maybe what kind of materials you used, where the family kept it, or anything like that.

All right. The next part of helping parents to develop a schedule is really looking at supporting parents to understand the importance of routines. You can have a schedule, but if they don't understand the importance of those routines, they may not follow the schedule and keep to it. They will soon see that when they have that schedule and routines, that it helps their day to run smoothly. And then in turn, this is going to maximize the interactions with their child. And can also prevent the child from becoming anxious and then behaving in ways that may become challenging for the adults.

Routines are also opportunities for embedding learning opportunities. Sometimes parents can feel overwhelmed thinking that they have to carve out some special time in their already busy days for learning opportunities. But in our role as a home visitor we can help parents to look for ways within their routine, to work on the child's individual learning goals. For example, they can utilize bath time for some of those dump and feel explorations. All right, well let's keep moving forward here. I'm going to turn it back over to Joyce.

Joyce: Yeah and another way too, is providing choices, to really work with families to provide acceptable and limited choices. That [Inaudible] choices, it really gives children the ability to feel like they have some power and control over what what's going on in their big world.

The visual you see here just lays that out. First beginning with transitional cues, meaning that we just want to start out by letting them know like hey there's a change coming, something is going to happen. And then after that offering a couple of choices is what's coming next. That could be something like hey, in five minutes it's going to be time to put away the blocks and get ready for a bath. Now be thinking about do you want trucks or cars in the tub? Saying just simple things like that. Things that need to happen but thinking about what are some of those choices that we could incorporate within that as well?

And then the last strategy we just wanted to point out is just the importance of establishing rules and expectations. You know that rules are helpful. They encourage that positive interaction within an environment, that children really learn what's expected of them, what's allowable and what's not allowable so much. But that's why rules and expectations are so important. And help parents to understand that rules don't necessarily help the day to run smoothly, but that's more about the routine. They do really help convey the important way that we learn together within our space together.

Roselia: The last thing that we want to talk about and we're going to look at just some considerations for children with disabilities. In this segment the small change of the impact. This is really looking at ways that you could support families in terms of getting to know the child as well as what is important to the family. This knowledge can really help you as a home visitor to implement small changes that can create big impact.

For example, if a family is participating in part C or part B services, and they have an IEP or an IFSP, as a home visitor it would be important for you to partner with service providers such as physical therapists, occupational therapists, speech and language therapists to really help the family to process what it is that the child is working on. And then also is an opportunity since really you as a home visitor, you're there much more than a lot of these service providers are going to be. Getting to know the providers, working with them and understanding the goals for the child can really help the family as you're continuing your work with the family as well.

An example of this, again is establishing any adaptations such as communication devices, picture schedules or those kinds of things. You can really help the family to think about their daily routine and how to best utilize some of these resources. Let's see here, we are starting to wind down. Joyce I'm not sure if you want to walk us real quick through this activity that they do have in their participants guide, and maybe they can do this after the session. What do you think?

Joyce: Yeah definitely. Just to point out a couple of things. We want to give you something to try out. We have a scenario in your participants guide to take a look at. And say hey what does this look like and feel like? It has to do with materials in the home. But take a look at that within your participants guide, that could be a great way to maybe connect with another home visitor within your program. That's one thing that we have here.

Then the other thing that we want to point out is we also have the bookcase. Here it's just some literature and resources that we made available for you. You have a list available there, for you to check out. We just wanted to be sure we left you with everything that you needed to feel supported. Some things to dig into later. And the great thing is you can go back to that participants guide to see what else is there? What other resources? What can I begin to use within my role? We have that. Again some great resources there, things connecting our responsive learning environment. Being more into the research of it. We have that. And then you also have again, our literature list. We have some great books and ideas that you can show the family there.

We want to say thank you so much for joining us today. We know that we've given you a lot to think about. We want to say mark your calendars for December the 14th for our next webinar. We're looking forward to continuing the conversation as well. And thank you for joining us today. And we will see you on MyPeers.