

## Coaching to Support Highly Individualized Practices

Sarah Basler: Hello and welcome to this episode of Coaching Corner. I'm your host, Sarah Basler, from the National Center on Early Childhood Development, Teaching and Learning, or DTL as we say for short. Today, we'll be talking about coaching to support highly individualized practices. We are joined by our colleague and guest expert, Jennifer Fung, or Jen as she's known to us. Jen, would you tell us a little bit about yourself?

Jennifer Fung: Thanks for having me, Sarah. It's great to be here. As Sarah said, my name is Jen Fung, and I am the inclusion lead at DTL. I lead planning and resource development in the area of disability inclusion. One of our many areas of work at DTL. Just a little bit about me. I am a former teacher in the IDEA system. I worked in Part C with our littlest learners, ages zero to three. I am a former Part C teacher and family resources coordinator that those littlest guys, infants, and toddlers and in particular infants and toddlers with autism who have just received a diagnosis. Providing early intervention, working with families, and supporting families. That's my first love. But I love to talk about highly individualized practices and inclusion of children with disabilities or suspected delays in all places because that's where all children belong. Thanks for having me, and I'm really excited to have a conversation with you today.

Sarah: We're excited that you're here. For our time together today, we're going to be discussing some strategies and practices that coachees can use to individualize for children that might need a little bit more support. We'll also talk about coaching strategies and use them and apply them through a case example. We also want to draw your attention to the Viewers Guide, which can be found in the resource widget of your webinar materials. The Viewers Guide has visuals and activities and reflections that we're going to be referring to as well as a resource list that is included at the end with great resources about disability inclusion as well as some PBC resources. We will be utilizing the chat function mostly throughout the webinar.

If you would like to respond to anything that we say or add in, ask a question about something that we're presenting, feel free to use that chat. If you have questions related to tech or about the platform itself, you can utilize the Q&A. Over the past two years, we've had a segment that we like to call the *Focus on Equity*, where we lift up equity topics which can be related to a variety of different learning areas, effective practices, or with different people.

The past Coaching Corner webinar and this webinar we have been focused specifically on equity and inclusion. Those are front and center. We're going to discuss ways a coach can support their coachees to use these practices and strategies and provide tips for coaches to consider when you're supporting coaches with children who need highly individualized support. We're going to get started and ask Jen lots of questions about highly individualized practices.

But before we begin, I want to let you know that throughout our time together we're going to point out practices or strategies that align with the different components in the PBC cycle. As a coach, you have this unique opportunity to really view the environment, the coachee and the children and the families with an objective outside lens. Sometimes coachees are very aware of

the needs of their children in the class or in their environment. But sometimes they might not be aware, or it might not be something that they notice, and you might be the first person as the coach that does notice that a child or children might need more individualized support to learn and be able to participate in that learning environment.

Once the coach and the coachee are aware, then that's when it's time to start planning for what individualized practices can be used, when to embed them throughout the day, and how to use those practices within that learning environment. The coach can also be a really great resource and support to coachees. We also want to point out that not only is the coach a great resource, but we recommend that the coach work together with the disability service coordinator to support coaches around with children who might have highly individualized needs.

You might be thinking how are practices used to support children's individual learning and behavior needs different from the teaching practices that I usually coach on? Are we talking about a different set of practices here? Well, the answer is that highly individualized practices are a set of effective teaching practices that are a part of a high-quality early learning environment. Every child has a skill or a goal that they might require a little bit more support on at some point. But highly individualized practices are more specialized and might involve providing more frequent instruction on a skill, or it could be that the practices that all staff can support them to learn, use, and share.

Highly individualized teaching practices can be used to help children participate, to access their learning environment. For example, if your program is focused on practices from the instructional support domain and you're drilling down to practices related to language modeling, some children may need more instruction or support that's matched to their individual learning needs to be successful, or to access language and support their learning.

A child might respond to questions using a picture system rather than verbal language. As a coach, you can use the PBC framework to support the coachee to use those highly individualized practices to support all children's learning. As a reminder, DTL uses a house to represent the six integral elements of quality teaching and learning for children ages birth to five and all program options. This represents a tiered model of support.

There are six elements of that framework for effective practice. It includes the foundation which is providing nurturing, responsive, and effective interactions in engaging environments. The second pillar, which is yellow — the first pillar that is yellow, which is implementing research-based curriculum and teaching practices. The second pillar in orange, using screening and ongoing assessment of children's skills.

Then the roof using highly individualized teaching and learning. In the center, we have parents and families. And then of course, the siding is strengthening equity-focused practices. Today we're going to be focusing our time on practices that are found in the foundation and the roof of this framework. We've linked the framework for effective practices in your Viewers Guide.

Jen, can you give us a little bit of an overview of tiered instruction and highly individualized practices so that we all have a shared understanding about what we're talking about today?

Jennifer: Thanks for asking, Sarah. Before I get started on that, I just want to note we got a question in the Q&A and a request to clarify. When I was introducing myself, I said IDEA, and I apologize for not explaining what that is for those who might not know. The IDEA is a federal law called the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, and that's a federal law administered by the U.S. Department of Education that provides services and supports for children with disabilities or delays who qualify for services under that Individuals with Disabilities Education Act or IDEA. And IDEA is complex, but there are two parts, Part C and Part B. And those really focus on the ages of the children who qualify and receive services. Part C is for children ages birth up to the age of three. Part B is for individuals, ages three through 21.

When we think about specialized services for children in Head Start who might qualify for IDEA services or looking at those Part C services for zero to three, and then-Part B for children ages three to five, for the children that we serve in Head Start. Thank you for asking for that clarification. My apologies. If folks are interested in learning more about IDEA, I can work with Sarah and Joyce to provide some information that can be shared in your My Peers community for folks who might have questions or kind of want to learn some of the basic information about IDEA because it does impact our work. Just wanted to say thank you for asking for that clarification.

Let's talk about tiered instruction and the framework for effective practice. We know that a really important goal of all high-quality services, but particularly for programs that are inclusive is to really be aware of areas where each child has individual needs whether that's a learning need, a learning or behavioral need, and really to match the type and the amount of instruction to really support those needs for all children but in particular, when we're talking about children who might have disabilities or suspected delays.

We use highly individualized teaching and learning practices to help all children, again, including those children who might have identified disabilities or delays or who might be at risk for developmental delays who are struggling for many different reasons to learn new skills and concepts. When we think about kind of how to organize ourselves and organize and plan instruction and support for all children the use of tiered instruction or tiered instructional frameworks, we will sometimes call them, is a best practice that really can help program staff use those teaching and support strategies that, again, have that really good match between a child's learning and behavioral characteristics and the instruction and support that we use, again, like you said, Sarah, so that all children can participate and learn in their learning environments.

Within a tiered framework, there are many different tiered frameworks, and you can see on the screen here, we've highlighted some areas of practice in the framework for effective practice, which is a tiered system or a tiered framework itself. But within an any tiered instructional framework, there are different levels of educational practices that represent various levels or varying levels of support and of individualization. In these tiered frameworks, kind of from

bottom to top, the teaching and support practices that are represented in each tier become more specialized, more individualized, and more intensive as you move up within the framework. Again, those different practices at those different tiers are used to support children who might need a different type or amount of instruction to make progress.

The Head Start framework for effective practice, like I said, is a tiered framework, and it represents these tiers that you see on the screen in front of you. The bottom tier in our case in the house framework, the foundation, really represents teaching practices and interactions and environmental planning strategies that are foundational to a high-quality environment. And these are practices that all children need to learn and develop.

And then the next instructional practices or tiers in the framework for effective practice are represented in the roof of the house, like you said, Sarah. Within the roof there are three different instructional tiers, and we'll kind of zoom in on the roof and we'll talk more about these instructional tiers, what the support and instructional strategies are, and when and why we might use them. We'll talk a lot more about those. But within the roof the instructional tiers are curriculum modifications, embedded teaching, and intensive individualized instruction.

And, again, the tiers, the instructional tiers within the framework for effective practice are becoming more intensive and more specialized as you move from bottom to top. Just a quick note before we kind of go in and dive a little more deeply into our look at the roof. The framework for effective practice, tiered instruction, and the teaching and support strategies that we talk about today, those can be used to support education staff whether that's teachers, home visitors, family childcare providers, these highly individualized practices can really be used across program options.

Sarah: From a coach and a coachee's perspective, especially if their background may not be in special education or working with children with disabilities, they might not be as familiar with what these more individualized practices at the top are. And also, might be using these practices and might not even be realizing it. Could you tell us a little bit more about the practices in the roof of the framework?

Jennifer: Of course. The practices and support strategies across these tiers in the roof that you see here on the screen, they're used for different purposes, and they're used to meet different learning needs. That first tier, we'll go kind of bottom to top, within the tiers in the roof. This first tier in the roof many folks might be familiar with. Those are curriculum modifications. Curriculum modifications are used when a child needs support, something different to participate or engage more fully in their learning environment or an activity or a routine. And really the rationale with focusing on providing that individualized support to really maximize participation and engagement is the idea that if a child is participating more fully, then they'll learn more readily from those activities and interactions in their environment.

Curriculum modifications can be small changes. They are. They're small changes, small adaptations, small additions to the learning environment, to activities, or maybe even to materials to really, again, help increase a child's participation within that activity, within their

learning environment. Curriculum modifications are a highly individualized strategy, though. So when we're thinking about the child's learning characteristics, what their strengths are and then we're also thinking specifically about the challenge that they're having with participation or with engagement in a particular activity. We're thinking about that challenge. We're thinking about the activity, and then we're thinking about the child's own learning and behavioral characteristics, and we're intentionally matching the modification strategy that we use. We're individualizing that. The next tier up in the roof is embedded teaching.

Whereas curriculum modifications are used to support learning by increasing participation, embedded teaching is used to support learning and development by providing more frequent instruction on a particular skill or goal or objective. Instruction at this tier, instruction, and support at the embedded teaching tier, might be used when a child's learning has slowed or stalled on a particular goal or maybe if they're struggling to use a specific skill that's part of a larger goal. Say like hand washing, for example, maybe the child can turn on the sink and get soap, but then afterwards scrubbing and turning off the sink when their hands are wet, they might have a difficult time with that. Maybe they need a little more frequent instruction on a particular component of a larger skill to help them continue to make progress.

We know that embedded teaching is really used to give children extra chances to receive instruction and practice a new skill or a skill that might be more difficult by intentionally and purposefully embedding many different teaching opportunities into everyday activities and routines and transitions with the idea that this deliberate and ongoing teaching will help a child make progress towards that particular learning goal or skill. The most intensive and individualized teaching tier in the roof is intensive, individualized teaching. Just what I said. The instructional and support practices in this tier are really used to support learning on a specific goal or skill or behavior, using teaching strategies or support strategies that are a bit more structured and planned and maybe specialized.

Thinking about what skills or objectives we might be targeting using intensive, individualized teaching, we might use intensive, individualized teaching when curriculum modifications have been used and embedded teaching has already been used, and we're finding that they're not supportive enough to help a child make progress. Or if we've tried different strategies and the child's progress is still really slow - slower than we might be expected or slower progress than they've shown on learning other skills and in concepts. We might also use instruction and support at this tier if a child has a really unique goal such as using a walker or using a picture communication system like you talked about earlier, Sarah.

We know that there are some specific and specialized teaching practices that can be used to target more unique goals. We might also use teaching and support at this tier if a child is missing prerequisite knowledge or a prerequisite skill or components of a specific skill that they need to learn in order to participate and really addressing school readiness. Whether that might be sharing joint attention, paying attention to other children or adults, and imitating what they're doing, we know that's a way that many children learn, but if children might need some

really intensive and specific support on imitating, what does it look like to watch somebody and copy what they're doing. Also playing appropriately with toys or even following directions.

Sarah: Awesome. That was super helpful. Thank you for breaking that down. If you want to know more or you want to dig in and have more information about curriculum modifications, embedded teaching, and intensive individualized teaching, you can find links to resources in the Viewers Guide of this webinar just about those specific practices in the tiered framework.

Now that we have a shared understanding, we're all kind of coming from the same place and knowing what we're talking about and that we're situated in the roof of the house, and we're going to move into the mindful moment segment, and we're going to discuss things that a coach can do to support coachees to use these practices when you have children that might need a little bit more support. Jen, I think sometimes for a coach, they might not know where to start. Where would you recommend that a coach start if they're supporting a coachee to use highly individual practices?

Jennifer: I think a really important first step is to make sure that the coachee knows about and is aware of the framework for effective practice and that the coachee has knowledge of tiered instruction and tiered instructional frameworks that we've been talking about, including understanding why tiered instruction is used, how it supports learning for all children, and especially when we're thinking about our work in Head Start programs, knowledge of the instructional tiers that I just described that are within the framework for effective practice. I don't think that right away a coach needs to support a coachee to learn about and use all the different practices or support strategies that are represented within the instructional tiers and, in particular, those highly individualized support strategies and practices to use those right away.

But I think that even the knowledge of this tiered system within a familiar framework, like the framework for effective practice, knowledge that there are more individualized and more intensive strategies that can be used when a child needs more support or a different type of support can be really empowering because as you mentioned, many coaches or coachees might not even be necessarily aware of these more specialized and highly individualized practices that are represented within the roof or even that there are instructional strategies or supports that can be used beyond those foundational strategies — those high-quality environments and interaction strategies.

When a child isn't responding to those foundational practices whether that's through not being engaged or not learning readily or even sometimes through their behavior. It can be frustrating, I know, for program staff, for coaches, and coachees, and staff might think I've tried everything, I'm implementing these foundational strategies really well, but it's not working, and I'm not sure what else to do. Learning about those more individualized supports and strategies in the higher tiers, I think can really help staff realize that there are other strategies that can be tried out, which in turn can empower them and can help support a problem-solving mindset. If this isn't working, what can we try next?

Sarah: I love that. Also, while we were talking, we had a chat question that said, “are highly individualized practices applied in order?”

Jennifer: That's a great question. The response is really every child is different and every situation is going to be different. With the exception, and we'll talk about this in a little bit, that the foundation should be firmly in place. We should know that our environments are accessible. We should know and plan for activities that all children can participate in, support for interactions and communication. Really thinking about — when we're thinking about a high-quality environment, is it accessible to many different types of learners?

We always want to start there. But then thinking about we don't necessarily want to wait for a child to fail. We don't want to only use foundational practices and then wait for the child to not be engaged and then move to curriculum modifications and then wait for the child to not progress. I'll give some more kind of guiding questions that can help folks think about when and what type of instruction and support across tiers might we want to use. We'll talk a bit more about that.

But I think really it is thinking about like, OK, based on the child's history — based on what we know about this child and their learning characteristics and based on the specific goal that we're targeting. Are we thinking about engagement, or are we thinking about maybe needing to provide more practice? We're anticipating that instruction on these types of goals may be kind of adaptive skills or self-help skills in the past have been a little more challenging for this child. Maybe we want to start off in the embedded teaching tier, providing more instruction, and more frequent opportunities for learning, and then kind of back off.

There isn't kind of a one-size-fits-all approach, unfortunately, but it really is relying on what teachers do best. What our grant recipients do best is knowing children, observing them, thinking about what their learning goals are, and then starting to plan our instruction and kind of where we start based on what we know. And then knowing, and we'll talk about this in a little bit, but knowing that where we start, we also want to be really intentional about observation and collecting data about how a child is responding to the support that we provide.

Sarah: That makes sense. When we were talking about how it can be kind of hard to know where to start, I really think that that's an important reminder because sometimes we want to jump right into action, and we can get overwhelmed ourselves and coachees about that we need to know all the things right away. Starting with learning about the framework for effective practice and digging into those practices and the roof and understanding tiered support is a great first step. As I mentioned earlier, we also recommend that coaches work closely with their program's disability service coordinator to understand if there might be specific strategies that can help support a child's IFSP or IEP goals. This made me think about another connection and that is to the collaborative partnerships of practice-based coaching.

It's important for the coach to learn about the coachee. Get to know them, get to know the children and the families that are in the coachee's environment. It's helpful for the coach to take time to learn about the learning environment itself. Get to know the coachee's teaching

style. It's going to be hard for a coach to know how to appropriately support a coachee to work with individual children if the coach doesn't have a good understanding of the makeup of the diverse strengths and the needs of the coachees and the children and families in that environment. We talked a little bit about prerequisite skills, but I wanted to be a little bit more specific here and dig in. Is there any prerequisite skills or practices a coach should observe a coachee having in place before suggesting moving to those highly individualized practices?

Jennifer: That's a great question. Before we talk about kind of those what should you have tried, what do you need to know before we work on highly individualized practices, there's two things that I really want to emphasize. And actually, one, we just talked about. Before moving on to more intensive and individualized strategies that are represented within the roof of the framework for effective practice, we want to make sure that instruction and support for all children begins with the solid foundation.

That we know that high-quality environments and interactions, we need them to be accessible, like I just said, to be using strategies that engage and support learning and participation for all children that are developmentally appropriate, linguistically and culturally appropriate, and really that that are flexible in engaging children responding to their communication and supporting their participation. These practices are essential for all children. The next thing that I want to emphasize about tiered instructional frameworks, it's really important to know that children move fluidly between the tiers that are represented, and their needs for support will really change from day to day or from week to week as they learn and as they progress and as they develop.

I always talk about my own daughter, for example. She learned pretty readily with access to a high-quality environment. She learned communication skills. She learned motor skills. She learned social skills. But she had a difficult time with adaptive and self-help skills. We and her teachers, we had to provide some more embedded instruction and even some more intensive and individualized instruction. I won't say on what goals. I want to respect her privacy. But when it came to some of those self-help skills. She wasn't always an embedded teaching-tier kid, right? But she also wasn't also always a foundational support tier.

Just using her as an example, depending on what the skill or the goal is depending on a child's sort of prerequisite skills on looking at a particular goal or objective area of development, the needs for support, and kind of like we keep saying the amount and type of support and instruction that a child needs will change often. Just making sure that we are all kind of on the same page when it comes to that. Now, let's talk about the practices and what considerations we might think about as we're deciding what tier to really focus on for a specific child and a specific goal.

Sarah: How would a coach know what practices from the roof to suggest a coachee to use?

Jennifer: If they have that solid foundation when it comes to selecting and really matching, again, the type and amount of support we use to a child's individual learning characteristics and to that specific goal or skill that we're wondering about. I always encourage people to think



about that our ultimate goal is to select and match the right type and amount of instruction to support a child's learning characteristics, their strengths, their areas of need, and to match that target skill or learning objective. We're not only looking at how we're teaching, we're looking at what we're teaching as well. Keeping those two things in mind. As I talked about earlier, the strategies in these instructional tiers that are represented in the roof are used for different purposes.

Curriculum modifications are used when there's a concern about a child's engagement and participation. In that case we want to think about is the child interested in an activity or the materials or the people in their learning environment but not able to fully participate and engage? We might ask ourselves is the child able to participate in some parts of a routine or an activity, but not all of them? For example, like that hand washing example I gave earlier. Or we might want to ask ourselves, or a coach might want to ask a coachee, would more full or independent participation in this activity or routine result in greater access to the learning environment or the activity?

When we're thinking about embedded teaching, again, this is used when a child is engaged but is the progress they're making towards a specific skill or goal is slower than we would expect to see. Then we really want to think about, OK, would the child make more progress or learn more readily if they had more instruction throughout the day and had more opportunities to practice that skill? It's not so much about it in engagement, but it's about opportunity. And then intensive individualized teaching, we use the strategies in this tier when a different instructional practice is needed than what we've been using in the foundational strategies in curriculum modifications or in embedded teaching.

Oftentimes, that's a practice that is specialized for a specific learning characteristic. Maybe a child has specific — maybe they're a visual learner. Or maybe they are working, like we said, on using an augmentative or alternative communication system. We're taking advantage of their visual learning strengths and teaching them to use a picture system. These strategies are either matched to specific goals or specific learning characteristics. Those are some general guidelines.

But like I said earlier, there really isn't a magic way to or a one-size-fits-all approach to know what type and amount of instruction a child needs for a particular goal. Again, those support needs, how much or what type of instruction or support a child needs really changes often depending on the activity, depending on the learning objective, and depending on the progress that a child has been making. The very best thing that we can do is use ongoing data-based decision-making to guide our instruction.

Sarah: I'm so glad you said that. That's such a good reminder that there isn't just a magic strategy or what works for one child is going to work for another. I think we get so caught up into implementation that we forget what works for one child might not work for another. You mentioned an ongoing database decision-making process. Can you describe that process?

Jennifer: Absolutely. When we're planning for highly individualized instruction and planning for that good match between the child's learning characteristics, their goal we're working on, and

the instructional and support strategies that we're selecting, we know that we need to plan, and we also need to assess how well that instruction and support is working for that particular child on that particular skill or goal. This happens through an ongoing process. You see on the screen here of what we call teach, assess, adjust.

This process involves planning based on a child's needs and their learning characteristics as I continue to say. We can't stress that enough. But really thinking about when we're planning, what are we teaching? What is that skill or goal, and how are we teaching it? What instruction or support are we using? Providing individualized instruction and a big part of that is making sure that we have a clear plan for not only what we're teaching but how we're teaching. Assessing — collecting information, collecting data on how well the child responds to this planned instruction that we've planned. Is the child learning? Is their behavior changing? Are we seeing increased independence and engagement? Whatever it is that that target goal might be.

Then after we've collected information on the child's progress and the child's response to our support, making decisions about instruction that are informed by the data that we've collected, about how we might need to adjust the level of support, the type, and the amount of instruction so that the child can keep learning. Do we need to change our instruction? Do we need to change what we're teaching? Do we need to focus on a different goal or objective? Maybe a prerequisite skill? Do we need to break this larger goal down into smaller components, or do we maybe need to think about how we're teaching, making a change into how we're teaching, using a different support or instructional strategy?

Like I said, we call this cyclical ongoing process teach, assess, adjust. The guidance that I provided about the instructional tiers what types of goals we might target and what types of kind of learning objectives or challenges we might be targeting, whether that's participation, the need for more frequent practice, that can give us an idea of where to start or what tier to look to in terms of planning our instruction and support. But the only way to really know whether an instructional practice, and that's highly individualized or otherwise, the only way to really know whether that's effective for a particular child is to continuously engage in this teach, assess, adjust process.

Sarah: That's so important to remember because I think sometimes we get caught up like I've tried it, but then if we're not really following this process, it could be that maybe we weren't implementing with fidelity, or maybe there was a part of the plan that was missing. I like that reminder. Bringing it back to the PBC cycle, we've talked about a lot of cycles today and a lot of frameworks. But I think it's important to point out that this teach, adjust, assess process is not something that a coachee is meant to do alone. In fact, it's going to take a team to support that coachee. The coach is a really important part of that team to walk through this teach, assess, adjust process. It's a parallel process, meaning that the coach and the disability service coordinator will support the coachee in planning instruction on a child's needs.

When we think about writing a goal, a specific goal related to that child's needs so that could be creating that action plan to provide that individualized instruction. The coach can support the

coachee in providing that individualized instruction and checking in on how the coachee is implementing through a focused observation. During that focused observation, the coach can help support in collecting data on the use of those strategies and how the child is responding to that planned instruction.

And in between cycles, the coach can collect data on their own individualized instruction and then share that data with the coach to then make data-informed decisions about how they might want to adjust the level of support or the type of support so that the child can keep learning. This can happen during reflection and feedback. Coachees aren't meant to do this alone. We've discussed a bit about this ongoing and parallel process. There are many things out there that might be wondering what we do to support a coachee to individualize practices, but the child isn't making progress towards their goal. If I'm supporting a coachee to individualize practices and we're not seeing any progress towards the goal, what do you recommend that the coach do to support the coachee?

Jennifer: That's a great question. When we're using this ongoing teach, assess, adjust process and collecting the data on the child's response how they're learning, whether or not their behavior is changing, and we're looking at those data and kind of looking at a summary of the data across multiple points, maybe that's over a few days, or maybe that's over a couple of weeks to really look and see can we see a pattern in the child's learning or the behavior to really help us know how is the child responding to our support.

If we're seeing through those data that the child is not responding as we expected them to that planned instruction and support, the team should really work collaboratively, including the coach to really change, like I said, what or how they're teaching. But before the team decides to make an instructional change, to change what they're working on, whether that's, like I said earlier, breaking down a goal into smaller components or working on a different skill or to change how they're teaching, I think it's really important to also look carefully at the instruction and support that was planned and look at what the child has received. We know that that child can't benefit from instruction or support that they didn't receive.

This is where the team really wants to look to their own practice to ask questions like, did we have a clear instructional plan? If we had a plan, did we follow it like we meant to? Did everybody on the team understand the plan? Did everybody on the team, if we were using a particular support or a particular instructional strategy, did everybody know what that was and know how to use it? Then we can answer that question.

Did we follow the plan? Did the child receive the instruction and the support that we meant for them to? When we see a child not making progress or not responding, it might not be that that practice or support isn't working for the child. It might be because the practice or support wasn't fully implemented. Maybe a coach needs to support that coachee to better understand that practice, how to use it in the moment, and maybe would, for example, benefit from the coach modeling the strategy.

This means that we really need to monitor whether the instructional practices in any tier are being used with fidelity. This is an area where coaches can really maximize their support during those observations. OK, we created the plan. Now during this focused observation, let's see how that teaching strategy was used by the coachee, how often they provided that support and used that strategy. I think there's lots of different ways that that coaches can support coachees whether that's even looking back at the instructional plan and saying, does it need to be more clear? Do we need to make sure everybody understands it? Then, thinking about, does everybody understand these instructional strategies, these support practices? And can they use them and feel confident using them.

Then, again, thinking about that assessment process or that teach, assess, adjust process, if we see that a child isn't learning as expected, we've determined that we did have a plan, we did follow the plan, then we want to go back kind of to that drawing board and say, OK, do we need to make a change in what we're teaching, so what skill or behavior we're targeting, and how the skill is being taught? This is a lot. It's a lot to think about. It's ongoing. There's lots of different moving parts.

I think a lot of people might be thinking, how could I do this? I want to tell folks about a resource that can support coaches in supporting coachees to use that teach, assess, adjust process. This is a brand-new resource. It's only a week old, Sarah. I'm really excited. This Coaching Corner episode is the first time that I've been able to talk about this to our Head Start workforce.

I am thrilled to introduce our newest mobile app which is called Inclusion Lab. Our team has been working really hard for a couple of years on creating this, and it was just released, like I said, a week ago. You see here on the screen this app is available for free. You can use it on both Apple and Android devices. And Inclusion Lab was designed to be a tool or a resource. We designed it with coaches, with education managers, with disability services coordinators, people who are supporting education staff to plan and evaluate and assess their use of evidence-based practices, whether, again, those are highly individualized practices or foundational practices.

This app, we encourage folks to check it out, to take a look at it. But it is really meant to support coaches and coachees as they engage in that teach, assess, adjust process across the instructional tiers in the framework for effective practice. There's lots of resources. There's lots of tools that are meant to support that planning, assessing a child's response and making data-informed decisions. We're super excited about it. Please take a look and tell us what you think.

Sarah: So exciting. We gave you lots of information about all this, and now you have an app that can help guide you through this process. Thank you so much for walking us through some things a coach can do. We're going to walk through an example quickly. I want to introduce you to Coach Min and Teacher Angela. Angela is a preschool teacher, and she's been working with her coach since September. Angela's current goal is focused on increasing child engagement during small group instruction.

Angela has been successful in increasing engagement class-wide but noticed that there's a child, Landon, that is still having trouble with engagement. We're going to watch a video that Min takes of Landon during one of the small group times to share with Angela. As you watch this clip, I want you to notice what Angela's co-teacher, Dory, does and Landon's engagement and participation. You can share in the chat what you notice about Landon's engagement and participation in the chat, and we'll talk about it.

[Video begins]

Teacher: Which color?

Landon: I don't know how.

Teacher: Blue or green?

Landon: Blue or green?

Teacher: Green. Write your name.

[Landon babbling]

[Video ends]

Sarah: That video is so cute. What did you notice about Landon's participation here? While we wait for some of the responses to come in, what were some of the things that you noticed, Jen? I think you're on mute.

Jennifer: I was. That is my signature move. I can't make it through a webinar without muting myself for a video and not unmuting. Thank you. To answer your question, what did I notice, I look at his engagement. This is a situation where I think that the challenge really is around his participation. He's there. He's at the small group activity. He's not trying to get away. He's there. He's holding the materials. He looked at the paper, but he's not participating. When we think about what are the expectations for an activity like this using the marker, the crayon, or the pencil, putting the pencil to paper. He's participating, but it's not full participation. The goal for him, for this activity might have been tracing or drawing. He's not benefiting from this learning activity because he's not fully engaged.

Sarah: I'm seeing lots of the same responses popping in that he didn't seem like he understood what to do. He was kind of playing and a little distracted and making some noises as he sat there. Now we're going to look at the action plan that Min and Angela decided to write. They wanted to individualize the goal to really focus on supporting Landon to become engaged during small groups. The things that Angela wrote into the goal was to provide individualized support by including his interests into the activity, modifying the length of the group activity to

just five minutes, and then modifying the expectations. Landon isn't going to be expected to write his name just yet but to sit and color with his peers.

Jennifer: Just a note that those are all - when we think about instructional tiers, those are all strategies from the curriculum modifications tier. This team did a great job of thinking about, OK, what's the challenge. He's maybe not interested. He's not participating fully. Let's use some strategies at the curriculum modifications tier to really see if we can target his participation and engagement. If we can increase that, then what? Then what will his learning look like?

Sarah: Awesome. Thanks for pointing that out so we can situate ourselves what those practices are. We're going to watch a video after this action plan was implemented. I want you to notice Landon's participation, his engagement, and then you'll have the same opportunity to share in the chat what you noticed.

[Video begins]

Child: Hey, come back.

Teacher: Here. You started.

Child: [Inaudible] you wrote that.

Teacher: Oh.

Child: Ta-da! What is it?

Teacher: I don't know. What are you —

Child: Stop, stop, stop.

Teacher: Hey, buddy. How are you? Can you do them on the bottom too? Can you do them all by —

[Video ends]

Sarah: Here we go. What were some of the things that you noticed? That video looked a little different than the first one. He seems to be coloring in that one. What did you notice, Jen?

Jennifer: Like you said, I think there's a couple things to notice. Notice what strategies were used, what specific modifications, and then also look at his response to those strategies.

Thinking about what strategies were used. You could see that his interests were incorporated. This is a little guy who likes Ninja Turtles. They incorporated that to help draw his attention to the activity to increase his interest and his engagement.

There was a timer thinking that maybe the addition of some visual information in addition to sort of changing the expectations of the - modifying the expectations of the activity, which is a curriculum modification strategy. He's coloring, but we also — they've shortened the amount of

time, but they also had a visual timer to help him think about if he has that visual information for how much time is left in the activity, will he, knowing those expectations, will it help him participate more fully?

Then he had I noticed that when somebody was commenting on his engagement in the first video, there are too many choices. There was too much. That was a modification strategy that these teachers used as well. They limited the number of choices. There was less to distract him. Those, in terms of what I noticed, those are the strategies, the curriculum modifications I noticed. Then, like you said, looking at his response to that planned instruction and that planned support he's a lot more engaged. He's holding the marker. He's coloring. His eyes are on the paper. Before he was saying, "I don't know how." He was sort of talking, and his head was down. He looks pretty engaged in this activity. I would say that in terms of his response to those modifications they seemed to work well for him.

Sarah: Awesome. We had one question that came into the chat that said, would you also create a goal to help him work on his name, maybe as an individual activity with adult? He knows how to hold the marker. Would you do other activities to help write the name?

Jennifer: Absolutely. Thinking about — and this is — that's a great question. That is something that we would think about through that ongoing that teach, assess, adjust process. It would depend on - I don't know this child well enough to know what his individual goals were on his Individualized Education program, his IEP goals. I know that he was getting ready to transition to kindergarten. Depending on what the IEP goals for him around those fine motor goals, whether that's drawing shapes, writing letters, whatever those might be, that's where we would want to look at, we've used curriculum modifications to get him more engaged in this activity.

Will being more fully engaged help him learn to trace those letters or write those letters or draw shapes, whatever his individual goal would be, and that's what we would want to look at and be collecting data - not only on his on his engagement, but also looking at what is his progress and what is this learning look like for that individual goal. If we didn't see progress with just curriculum modifications on that IEP goal or on his individual learning goal, that's when you would want to think about, do we need to change what we're focusing on? Does he only need to work on if the goal is tracing the letters in his name, does he only need to work on focusing on the first initial right now, the first letter in his name, or do we even need to work on how he's — I don't know.

You can see in the video here; he's holding the pen pretty well. But for some children, it might even be working on their grasp and how they're holding the pen or the marker or whatever they're using to write with. That's where again, we would use that ongoing database decision-making and say, now that he's more engaged, what are those IEP goals, and is he making progress on them? If not, yes, maybe we need to change what we're focusing on or how we're teaching. Does he need more practice or more kind of specialized instruction to meet that particular goal? That's a great question.

Sarah: Awesome. Well, we are right at time, and we thank you so much for joining us today, Jen, and answering all our questions about highly individualized practices. If you would take a moment to please complete the evaluation and then we will see you next time for our next episode on March 20th. We'll be talking about coaching to support, responding to behaviors that challenge adults. We'll see you hopefully in March. Thanks, everybody.

Jennifer: Thanks, everybody.