

PRISM Training Modules

Focusing on Relationships

Pyramid Resources for Infant-Toddler Social-Emotional Development
University of Kansas

Adapted from:
The Center on the Social and Emotional Foundations for Early Learning
Vanderbilt University

These materials were supported by the Institute of Education Sciences, U.S. Department of Education, through Grant R324A170118 to University of Kansas. The opinions expressed are those of the authors and do not represent views of the Institute or the U.S. Department of Education. You may reproduce these materials for training and information purposes.

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Learner Objectives

- **Understand how attachments and relationships build over time**
- **Learn ways to grow relationships with children and families**
- **Learn how culture and family risk factors affect your role as a caregiver**

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Training Agenda

- **Setting the Stage: Review**
- **Building Relationships with Children & Families**
- **Understanding Families: Cultural Influences**
- **Understanding Families: Risk Factors**
- **Essential Positive Messages**
- **Wrap-up & Reflection**

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Our Learning Environment

What can the trainer do to facilitate a safe learning environment?

How can other training participants help make the training environment conducive to your learning?

What are some agreements we can make?

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Possible Shared Agreements

- Confidentiality
- Take Care of Yourself and Others
- Demonstrate Respect for all
- Right to Pass
- Right to Take Risks
- Assume Positive Intent
- Recognize We Are All Learning

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Warm Up Activity: Partner Discussion

What is something you really enjoyed learning about at a past training?
If you have never been to an early childhood training before today, share something you think you'd enjoy learning more about.

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What Are Relationships?

Relationships...

Have emotional connections

Endure over time

Have special meaning between the two people

Create memories and expectations in the minds of the people involved



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Activity: Reflective Inventory

Handout 3: Reflective Inventory

Name three things that make the relationship satisfying.

What messages about relationships did you receive from your family and/or culture?

Do you behave the same way (or differently) as adults who cared for you?

Reflective Inventory
Take time to think about each question on the inventory and write out some answers to each. When you complete the inventory, choose a partner at your table to share your reflections with.

Think about a satisfying relationship in your life. Name three things that make it satisfying:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

Think about the messages you received about relationships from your family and culture. Try to put those messages into words:

Think about yourself as a child. Do you behave in your relationships with children the same way important adults behaved with you (e.g. playful, cautious, honest, patient, etc.)? Try to put into words what you know to be true of your behavior with the children in your life today.

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"Be the person you needed when you were younger."
-Ayesha Siddiqi


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Forming and Sustaining Relationships with Young Children and Families
Attachment Relationships

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Attachment Relationships

Attachment is a pattern of interaction that develops over time as the infant or toddler and caregiver engage.



The word cloud features the word "ATTACHMENT" in the largest font in the center. Other words include "SECURE" (vertical on the left), "COMFORT" (vertical on the right), "RESPONSE EMOTIONAL" (top), "SAFETY" (top left), "BASE" (bottom left), "CONSISTENT" (bottom center), "PREDICTABLE" (bottom right), and "HISTORY" (vertical below "BASE").

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Attachment Relationships

PRISM Relate - Supporting Attachment



The photograph shows a woman with glasses and a ponytail sitting on a couch, interacting with a young child. They appear to be looking at something together. The NCPMI logo is in the bottom right corner of the image.

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**Activity:
Attachment Relationships**

**Handout 4:
Attachment Relationships**

What could the professional do to promote the infant-caregiver relationship?

Attachment Relationships
Directions: Briefly discuss the vignettes with a partner.
What could the professional do to promote infant-caregiver relationships?

Vignette 1: When a home visitor arrives, she finds a father and his 5-month-old baby deeply engaged in play on the floor. While she knows that she needs to get a lot of paperwork filled out during this visit, she also knows that one of her primary jobs is to support the relationship between these two. She watches as the baby reaches and scoots on her tummy for a toy, while Dad, on his tummy, too, is building the excitement and encouraging her but not letting the excitement get out of hand. She reaches the toy and flashes him a smile that says, "Being with you is wonderful!"
What might the home visitor do to promote the development of this relationship?

Vignette 2: An infant care teacher in a center-based program is trying to calm a 10-week-old baby with colic. The baby cries and cries, even when being held. The teacher is concerned about the needs of this child and her other three children.
How can this infant care teacher use this moment to build the child's attachment relationship with her?

Vignette 3: A one-year-old toddler across the play yard from where the teacher is sitting on a blanket with another baby. She wants to watch the children in the next play yard through the fence but keeps looking back worriedly at her teacher.

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**Attachment Relationships:
Observation**

How is the caregiver participating in the relationship?

What about the child?




Shared by Kristin Tenney-Blackwell

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**Attachment Relationships:
Observation**

How is the caregiver participating in the relationship?

What about the child?




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**Attachment Relationships:
Observation**

How is the caregiver participating in the relationship?

What about the child?



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Attachment Relationships:
Observation



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Activity:
What Do Your Relationships Look Like?

Imagine someone is taking pictures of your interactions with children throughout the day...

- What kinds of interactions would be captured?
- What strengths would be identified?
- How many moments of these types of interactions make up the day for the infants and toddlers in your care?
- How might you increase joyful interactions like these in your care setting?

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Strategies to Build A Secure Relationship with a Very Young Child

Attempt to understand the child's behaviors, communication and needs

Acknowledge and respond to a child as soon as possible

Use natural opportunities to be physically close and affectionate (holding, rocking, sitting near)



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Strategies to Build A Secure Relationship with a Very Young Child

Use a warm, responsive tone

Join child's activities & follow child's lead

Listen & respond to child's communication

Use alternative strategies to communicate



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Strategies to Build A Secure Relationship with a Very Young Child

Use routines such as diapering and feeding as one-on-one time to interact individually

Acknowledge and mirror child's emotions

Support children who are frustrated or in conflict

Consider conversations reflecting the child's culture



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Activity: Enhancing My Relationships

Handout 5: Enhancing my Relationships

List 3 things that you will do in the next three weeks to help "fill/refill" relationship tanks - things that will make a child feel really special, things that will help build a positive relationship with a child.

1

2

3

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Forming and Sustaining Relationships with Young Children and Families

Building Relationships with Families



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Activity: Building a New Relationship

Find a partner you don't know

Find a way to get to know your partner

Write down how you started the conversation and highlight what you talked about



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“Families who are active, respected participants in their children’s learning and educational settings can help providers see new ways to build safe, welcoming, and trusting environments.”



Reedy & McGrath, 2010; Powell, Son, File, & San Juan, 2010
<https://eckkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/pdf/pco-framework.pdf>

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Supporting the Parent-Child Relationship

A child’s first and primary teacher is the family

Supporting and enhancing the parent-child relationship is one of the most important roles caregivers have

Caring for infants and toddlers is caring for the family



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Building Relationships with Families

PRISM Relate - A Parent’s Perspective



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Building Relationships with Families: Strategies

- **Communicate daily with families and offer multiple ways to share information (build a ritual at drop off or pick up)**
- **Greet parents, invite conversation, listen, and follow up**
- **Have regularly scheduled times for face-to-face meetings**
- **Respect families' views and child rearing beliefs**
- **Seek family evaluations of the program and of your care**



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Building Relationships with Families: Strategies

- **Seek families' knowledge**
- **Ask families questions**
- **Ask families to help**
- **Get to know family members**
- **Share something personal**
- **Share observations about their child**



All About Me!
Please complete and return so we can learn more about your child and family!

My Picture	My name is _____ and I like to be called _____	Things I like ☺	Things I don't like ☹
My Faves	I celebrate...	I live with...	My Family
Food: _____			
Toy: _____			
Song: _____			
Book: _____			
Animal: _____			

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Forming and Sustaining Relationships with Young Children and Families

Understanding Families: Cultural Influences



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Understanding Families: Cultural Influences How Culture Influences Caregiver Behavior

Individual and culturally based beliefs, values and perceptions affect caregiver attitudes about behavior



Infants and toddlers don't come to care knowing what behaviors are appropriate in group care settings

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Understanding Families: Cultural Influences
 Mean Age Expectation in Months
 for Feeding Milestone Attainment

Skill	Caucasian	Puerto Rican	Filipino
Eat Solid Food	8.2 ^P	10.1 ^{C,F}	6.7 ^P
Training Cup	12.0 ^{F,P}	17.1 ^{C,F}	21.9 ^{C,P}
Utensils	17.7 ^{F,P}	26.5 ^{C,F}	32.4 ^{C,P}
Finger Food	8.9	9.4	9.5
Wean	16.8 ^F	18.2 ^F	36.2 ^{C,P}

Carlson & Harwood (2000)



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Understanding Families: Cultural Influences
 Large Group Discussion

How might differing cultural expectations among you and other caregivers and/or parents impact your work with children and their social-emotional development?

As a caregiver, can you think of any examples where you had differing values, beliefs and ideas about how to care for an infant?



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Understanding Families: Cultural Influences
 Partner Discussion

According to your cultural/family beliefs and values, toddlers should complete potty learning by 32 months. The family of a young child you care for expects their child to complete potty learning at 20 months. What can you do to best understand and support this child and family?



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Understanding Families: Cultural Influences

PRISM Relate - Learning From Families



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Understanding Families: Cultural Influences Strategies

- Visit families' homes and communities
- Support children's home languages
- Develop cultural competency
- Share picture books where children in the stories come from around the world or diverse cultures
- Ask families to share a special lullaby or song from their culture



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Forming and Sustaining Relationships with Young Children and Families

Understanding Families: Risk Factors



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Understanding Families: Possible Risk Factors Affecting Families

- Poverty
- Nonflexible work situations
- No maternal or paternal leave
- Little support from other family members or neighbors
- Challenging relationships with their own families
- Substance abuse
- Domestic violence
- Racial inequity or trauma
- Mental health
- Foster Care
- Teen parents



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Understanding Families: Risk Factors Parental Depression

A combination of symptoms that interfere with all aspects of work and family life.

An illness that frequently

- starts early in life
- may have a biological component
- produces substantial disability in functioning



http://www.nccp.org/publications/pdf/text_791.pdf

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Understanding Families: Risk Factors Research on Depression in Early Head Start Families

Nearly half of mothers (48%) were depressed at enrollment
Depression was chronic for 12% of those mothers
18% of fathers were depressed when child was 2 years old;
16% when child was 3 years old



http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/opre/ehs/ehs_resrch/reports/dissemination/depression/depression_talkingpts.pdf

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Understanding Families: Depression Can Impact Child Development

- **Birth outcomes**
- **A parent's ability to bond and attach to her child**
- **A young child's language, cognitive, and behavioral development**
- **A parent's ability to follow appropriate health and safety guidelines**



http://www.nccp.org/publications/pdf/text_791.pdf

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Understanding Families: Risk Factors

Family Connections – A Mental Health Consultation Model

<https://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/mental-health/article/family-connections-mental-health-consultation-model>



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Understanding Families: Risk Factors Four Things Caregivers Can Do

1. **Inquire about parents' feelings at a time and place where you both feel comfortable**
2. **Listen without interrupting and avoid judgment**
3. **Ask the family member how she is feeling and if she would like extra support. If yes, use your resources to provide a referral to mental health resources in your community.**
4. **Provide information and referrals about home visiting programs.**



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**Activity:
Practice
Implementation
Checklist**

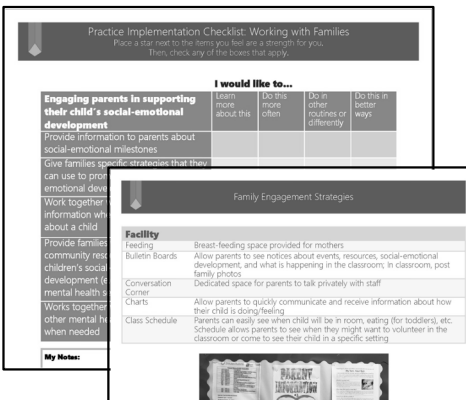
**Handouts 6 & 7: Practice
Implementation
Checklist & Family
Engagement Strategies**

**Place a star next to your
strengths**

**Check ANY of the boxes
that apply to you**

Fill out front and back






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**Activity: Essential Positive Messages
for Each Child and Family**

**Please take a moment to generate a list of essential
messages for young children and families. The messages
should be about...**

- **How valuable they are to us**
- **How committed we are to them**

**Think about, what are concrete behaviors that will convey
the message(s)?**



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Major Messages to Take Home

- **It is within families that children learn to experience and communicate emotion.**
- **Early social-emotional wellness develops within the context of relationships.**
- **Caregivers are critically important to social-emotional development of infants and toddlers.**
- **Caregivers who use a variety of strategies will be better able to form close relationships with infants, toddlers and their families.**

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