



Supporting Responsive Caregiving

Module: I
Topic: Responsive Caregiving
Type: Discuss/Report
Group Size: Small Groups
Time: 20 - 30 minutes

Purpose:

To identify how both caregivers and administrators can support responsive caregiving in the classroom.

What you will need:

Participant Materials	Trainer Materials	Equipment
<p>The following handouts: :: Examples of Responses Compiled from Previous Trainings</p> <p>The following materials: :: Flip chart paper for each small group.</p> <p>At the top of each paper place one of the following questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “How can administrators support responsive caregiving in the classroom?” or • “How can caregivers support responsive caregiving in the classroom?” <p>:: Colored Markers for each small group.</p>	<p>:: PITC Video: <i>Getting In Tune</i></p> <p>:: A list of possible responses to questions on flip chart paper (attached as a Handout entitled: Examples of Responses Compiled from Previous Trainings)</p>	<p>:: TV/VCR</p>

Directions:

1. This activity should be done after participants have been introduced to the three steps in the responsive process Watch, Ask, Adapt, and viewed the PITC video, *Getting in Tune*.
2. Suggest to participants that creating responsive classrooms requires a commitment from both teachers and administrators. In order to be successful, a system has to be developed in a program that supports this philosophy. If administrators assume it is the responsibility of the caregivers, or if caregivers believe that it is only a decision that can be made by administrators, then the responsive process is not likely to be fully implemented.
3. Break participants into small groups of three or four people. Assign each group to a different part of the room and provide them with markers and a flip chart paper that either has the question, “How can administrators support responsive caregiving in the classroom?” or “How can caregivers support responsive caregiving in the classroom?” Ask them to list suggestions on the flipchart paper in response to the question they were assigned.
4. After allowing 10-15 minutes for discussion, bring the group back together and first ask the groups discussing the role of the caregiver to offer their ideas. Ask each small group to take turns offering one idea until all the lists are covered. Suggest to groups that they only report the ideas that have not been covered by another group. Then ask the groups discussing the role of the administrators to report in a similar manner.
5. As a facilitator during the reporting process, you may also want to clarify points or make additional suggestions. Examples of some of the ideas that could be suggested are included at the end of the activity.

PITC ACTIVITIES

Variations:

:: This activity is especially worthwhile if there are both administrators and caregivers participating in the groups. Responses from the group work can be compiled and sent to participants after the training is completed.

Links to Head Start Program Performance Standards:

:: 1304.21(a)(1)(i) Early Childhood

Activity Developed by:

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Source Material:

Lally, J.R. (Executive Producer/Content Developer/Writer), Mangione P.L. (Content Developer/Writer), Signer, S. (Content Developer/Writer), Butterfield, G.O. (Producer/Editor), & Gilford, S. (Writer). (1990). *Getting in tune: Creating nurturing relationships with infants and toddlers* [Videotape]. United States: The Program for Infant/Toddler Caregivers (Developed collaboratively by the California Department of Education and WestEd).



Examples of Responses Compiled from Previous Trainings:

How can caregivers support responsive interactions in the classroom?

- Take time to follow the child's lead
- Focus on caregiving routines as opportunities to provide responsive interactions
- Understand and respect the child's temperament. Get to know each child.
- Develop an understanding of child development. The same age doesn't mean the same skill.
- Get to know the families of children and ask families about how to best interact with their child. If the child has special needs, learn from any specialist involved with the family (with the family's permission).
- Have primary caregivers for each child
- Be aware of yourself and your own "hot spots."
- Set up environments that are developmentally appropriate and easily supervised
- Set up environments that are well organized, so that you don't have to hunt for equipment and supplies and other adults can easily step in and support you.
- Communicate with administrators
- Take breaks to preserve your own mental health

How can administrators support responsive interactions in the classroom?

- Continually increase your knowledge and skills in working with infants and toddlers.
- Maintain low teacher child ratios and small group sizes
- Set up schedules that allow for consistency of adults in classrooms
- Encourage primary caregiving assignments
- Help the staff understand the value of responsive interactions. Provide education that is current and reflective of best practices.
- Give staff permission to sit back and observe children
- Acknowledge when staff are responsive
- Invest in environments that encourage responsive caregiving, i.e. include comfortable spaces and some adult size furniture that facilitate interactions.
- Provide staff planning time
- Provide time for staff to network
- Create systems to increase self-awareness
- Provide time for staff to develop relationships with families.
- Provide time for reflection
 - to support mental health of staff
 - on environment
 - to focus on child
- Provide mentoring for staff
- Implement reflective supervision and support caregiver's confidence
- Respect staff, provide for the needs of staff and alleviate stress for staff when possible.
- Listen and be responsive to staff feedback.