



Coaching Feedback

Coaching is used in early childhood intervention to support parents and other important caregivers to use everyday activities and routines to promote child learning and development.

Five research-based characteristics must be used for coaching to have a capacity-building effect: observation, action/practice, reflection, feedback, and joint planning.

Rather than jumping to suggestions, early intervention practitioners using a coaching style of interaction prompt caregiver reflection first, then provide feedback as needed and as a natural part of the conversation.

Three types of feedback:

1. Affirmative - non-judgmental acknowledgement.

- “I hear you.”
- “I understand.”
- “I know what you mean.”
- “Okay.”

Tip: In addition to words, provide affirmative feedback using head nods and facial expressions that acknowledge what is being said.

2. Evaluative - encouragement, praise, or positive reinforcement for what the caregiver does or says.

- “Good job.”

- “That was great!”
- “I really liked that.”
- “You’re the best.”

Tip: Ask the caregiver to evaluate or share what they think first, then follow their response with affirmative or evaluative feedback if beneficial.

3. Informative - sharing information, ideas, or strategies after the caregiver has been provided with the opportunity to reflect on what they know, have tried, or are doing.

- ““What we know about _____ is _____.”
- “An idea we might want to try is _____.”
- “Recent research found that _____.”

Tip: Ask permission prior to sharing informative feedback (“Do you mind if I share an idea about that?”) and follow-up informative feedback with an analysis question (“What do you think about what I just shared?” or “How well do you think that would work?”) to obtain feedback from the caregiver.