



This guide offers suggestions for presenting **Curriculum Modifications: Invisible Support**. This in-service suite includes a PowerPoint presentation and supporting materials. Please use and adapt these materials as needed for specific audiences.

MATERIALS NEEDED:

- PowerPoint presentation (15 slides)
- Projector and audio equipment
- Learning Activities
 - » *Scenario*
 - » *Mind Map* (Optional)
- Tips for Teachers
- Flip chart or similar large paper, and markers for writing participant ideas

BEFORE YOU BEGIN:

- The purpose of this presentation is to provide participants with a deeper understanding of one type of curriculum modification: *invisible support*.
- This is one in a series of in-service suites on curriculum modifications. If participants need a basic introduction to curriculum modifications before focusing on the eight general types, please reference the *Curriculum Modifications: An Introduction* in-service suite. For a brief review, reference the *Tips for Teachers* handout from that suite.
- Participants are encouraged to consider how using invisible support can increase the participation of specific children in their class.
- Learning activities offer participants opportunities to identify how to use invisible support based on the specific needs, strengths, and interests of individual children.
- Many of the examples provided in this in-service suite can support a variety of children, based on a variety of needs. Consider adapting the scenarios and supplementing with your own to fit your particular audience.
- An optional learning activity is described in detail at the end of this document.

NOTE

The *Helpful Resources* and *Tools for Supervisors* handouts are overarching tools that apply to all of the in-service suites in the Curriculum Modifications series. They can be found in the *Curriculum Modifications: An Introduction* in-service suite.



SLIDE 1: CURRICULUM MODIFICATIONS: INVISIBLE SUPPORT

Introductions:

- Begin the training by giving participants background information on yourself.
- Provide an opportunity for participants to introduce themselves (where they are working, their current roles, etc.).
- Conduct an icebreaker related to using *invisible support* to promote participation.

Example: Supermarket

The first player says: "I went to the supermarket to buy an avocado (or any other supermarket item that begins with an A). The next player repeats the sentence, including the A word and adds a B word.

Each successive player recites the sentence with all the alphabet items, and adds one more. For example, "I went to the supermarket and bought an avocado, beans, cat food and diapers."

DISCUSSION

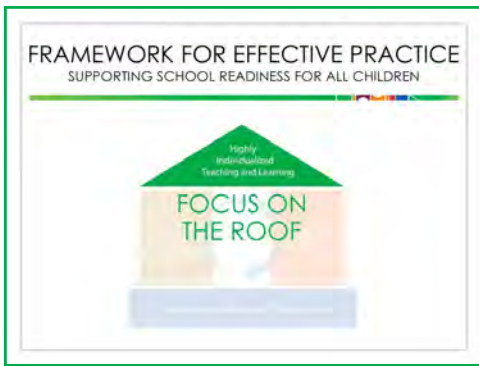
Ask participants to share their answers to the following questions:

- Was the game easier or harder at the beginning or end?
 - » Why?
 - » What made it easier or harder?
- How can you relate this experience to children in your classroom?

Possible answers:

- Easier at the end because others gave me ideas for the answers.
- Easier at the beginning because there was less to remember.
- For a child with memory issues, have them contribute an answer at the beginning.
- For a child who needs a challenge, have them contribute near the end.





SLIDE 2: NCQTL'S FRAMEWORK FOR EFFECTIVE EVERYDAY PRACTICE

Introduce NCQTL.

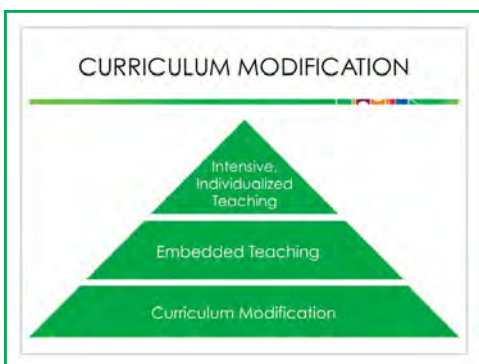
The four components of the House Framework support school readiness for all children.

After the foundation of the house is secure and all the indicators of a high-quality early childhood program are in place, there may still be children who are struggling to participate or to maximize their potential.

These children may include:

- A child who isn't making progress and needs extra support in a particular area of learning.
- A child with an Individualized Education Program (IEP).
- A child who is a dual language learner (DLL).
- A child who seems to be excelling in some areas of learning and in need of more challenge.

All these children can be supported or challenged, based on their unique needs, by using the teaching strategies introduced in the roof.

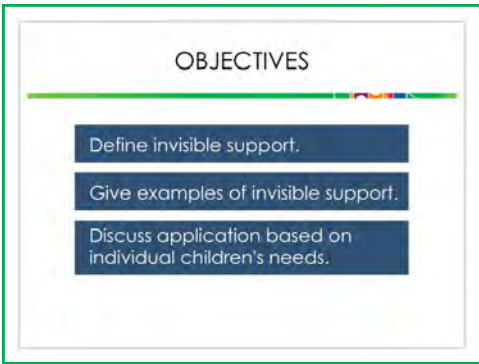


SLIDE 3: CURRICULUM MODIFICATION

The roof portion of the Framework for Effective Practice is separated into three tiers of highly individualized teaching: *Curriculum Modification*, *Embedded Teaching*, and *Intensive Individualized Teaching*. In the roof, the levels of support intensify from the bottom tier to the top.

Curriculum Modification is the bottom tier of the roof. This tier is about making *small* changes or additions to classroom activities that have a *big* impact on a child's engagement and learning.

This in-service suite focuses on how, with some careful planning, invisible support can be used to promote children's participation and learning.



SLIDE 4: OBJECTIVES

Objectives for the presentation:

- Define invisible support.
- Give examples of invisible support.
- Discuss application based on individual children's needs.

The last objective refers to the learning activities, which encourage participants to think about how invisible support can be integrated into the classroom curriculum to promote participation.



SLIDE 5: WHAT IS CURRICULUM MODIFICATION?

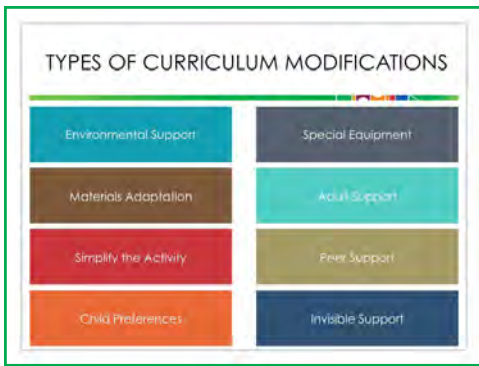
Definition: A curriculum modification is a change to the classroom activity or materials in order to facilitate or maximize a child's participation in planned activities, interactions, and routines. Curriculum modifications do not significantly alter the content, scope, or sequence of a curriculum.

A curriculum modification:

- Increases a child's ability to participate.
- Requires just a little extra thought and planning.
- Is easy to implement.
- Has a fairly immediate impact if it's going to work.
- Does not need additional resources, in most cases.

A curriculum modification is a small change that can make a powerful impact on a child's participation, sense of belonging, and opportunity to learn.





SLIDE 6: TYPES OF CURRICULUM MODIFICATIONS

Classroom activities and routines can be modified and adapted in a variety of ways. The eight general types of curriculum modifications are:

- | | |
|-----------------------|--------------------------|
| Environmental support | Special equipment |
| Materials adaptation | Adult support |
| Simplify the activity | Peer support |
| Child preferences | Invisible support |

The focus of this in-service suite is on invisible support.

NOTE

Some examples of the modifications in this presentation can fit into other categories *in addition* to invisible support (i.e. peer support, adult support, materials adaptation). Encourage participants to focus on children's individual needs and interests rather than the type of modification that is being discussed.

EMPHASIZE

Focus on the strategy that is the best fit for the child.



SLIDE 7: INVISIBLE SUPPORT

Definition: "Purposeful arrangement of naturally occurring events within one activity."

Photos 1 and 2:

Children are engaged in a quiet activity at circle time. Then, when a couple of children lose interest and become disengaged, a movement activity is introduced. The teacher has intentionally shortened circle time and alternates stationary and movement activities throughout.

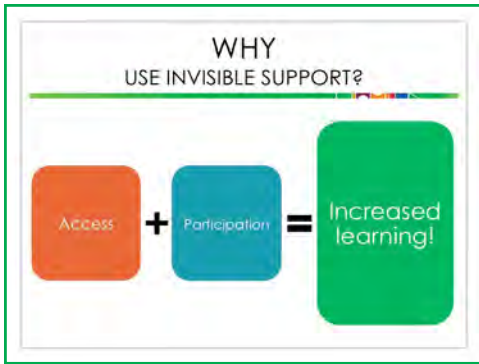
Photo 3:

When children are making muffins, a child may have difficulty stirring because it requires a lot of motor strength. The teacher positions the child so he gets to use the eggbeater later, when the batter is easier to stir.

Reference for definition:

Sandall, S., & Schwartz, I. (2008). *Building blocks for teaching preschoolers with special needs*. Baltimore: Paul H. Brookes Publishing.





SLIDE 8: WHY USE INVISIBLE SUPPORT?

Teachers work hard to develop lessons that get each *individual* child *actively involved* in learning. Even with the most thoughtful lesson plans and well-structured classrooms, some children still struggle to participate or to maximize their potential. Simple modifications to the curriculum, such as using invisible supports, can help these children progress.

More specifically, teachers who modify activities and materials based on individual needs and strengths ensure that children are not bound by a single way of participating. Successful learning can then take place in a variety of ways.

Access + Participation = Increased Learning

- Modifications provide **access** to the planned activities, interactions, and routines.
- Increased access leads to a higher level of **participation**.
- Participating in a meaningful way provides a greater opportunity for **learning**.



SLIDE 9: INVISIBLE SUPPORT STRATEGIES

Invisible support is when you think proactively about *the order in which you do things* to benefit children. Invisible support increases a child's participation without being obvious to the child or others.

Invisible support is:

- Purposeful.
- Planned.
- Naturally occurring within an activity or learning center.

Two ways a teacher can provide invisible support is to:

- Sequence the turns within an activity.
- Sequence the activities within an activity or learning center.



Length of video: Approximately 1 minute and 57 seconds

SLIDE 10: DEFINITION AND EXAMPLES

Introduce the video.

In this interview, Dr. Gail Joseph defines invisible support and gives an example of sequencing actions within an activity.

VIDEO 

DISCUSSION 

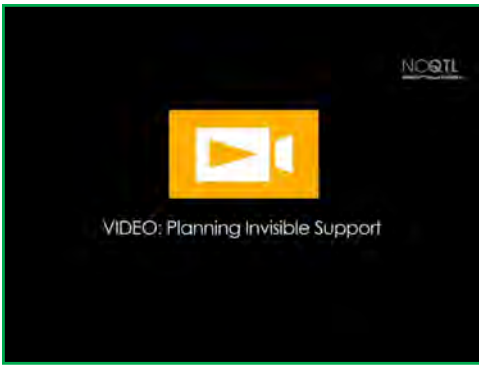
Ask participants to share answers to the following questions:

- How did Dr. Joseph describe invisible support?
- What examples did she give?
- Have you used, or are you using invisible supports in your classroom?

Possible answers:

- Invisible supports can be hard to notice, are proactive, and have to do with the order in which children are asked to do things.
- An observer may have no idea that invisible supports are in place.
- Examples include using words that rhyme and scooping frozen yogurt.





Length of video: Approximately 1 minute and 5 seconds

SLIDE 11: PLANNING INVISIBLE SUPPORT

A key component of invisible support is being proactive and that requires teachers to plan with team members.

Introduce the video.

This video has two parts. In part one you'll see teachers discuss a child's needs as they debrief at the end of the day. In part two you'll see their use of invisible support for that child.

NOTE

Presenters can pause at the end of each part to conduct a discussion with participants.

VIDEO: PLANNING—PART ONE

Part one shows teachers planning a way to increase a child's participation in a large group activity.

DISCUSSION

Possible questions:

- What concern did the teachers identify?
- How did they decide to address the concern?

Possible answers:

- A child doesn't like to participate in large group musical and movement activities.
- The teachers decide to have the child lead the activity.

VIDEO: PLANNING—PART TWO

Part two shows how the teachers' plan worked. Watch the child who is first in line and then given the first turn.

DISCUSSION

Possible questions:

- What did the teachers do?
- Did the plan increase the child's participation?
- Any other ideas?

Possible answers:

- The teachers let the child be first in line and then let him have the first turn with the drum.
- Their plan increased the child's participation.
- He stayed in line and he played the drum for the first dance.





Length of video: Approximately 55 seconds

SLIDE 12: SEQUENCE TURNS

Sequencing turns is when teachers proactively plan *the order* in which children take turns. Teachers support a child's participation when they *plan* the sequence of turns.

Examples:

- A child with modest fine motor strength may be able to participate during an art activity if she is the first to squeeze glue from a full glue bottle.
- A child who is reluctant to speak may need multiple opportunities to hear answers to questions like "What is the weather like today?" Asking this child to respond after two or three others have answered increases the chance he will participate.
- A teacher enhances participation outdoors by having a child who is hesitant watch others slide down the slide before taking that first scary attempt.

Introduce the video.

This video shows how a teacher has planned the order in which children clap and then say the number of syllables in their names at a transition time.

VIDEO 

DISCUSSION 

Possible questions:

- How did the teacher plan the order of turn taking?
- How could the teacher encourage the target child to observe?
- How, and for whom, might sequencing turns apply in your classroom?
- Any other ideas?

Possible answers:

- This teacher had children who knew how to clap the syllables in their name go before children who did not know how to clap syllables.
- The teacher planned the sequence for two different children.
- A teacher could direct a target child's attention to a peer as she claps the syllables in her name.





Length of video: Approximately 48 seconds

SLIDE 13: SEQUENCE ACTIVITIES

Another invisible support strategy is to plan the sequence of activities within an activity or learning center.

Examples:

For a child who is working on a math skill, the teacher may sequence the events within the activity to look like “Grandma’s Rule”: first you follow my pattern and then you can make your own pattern.

Sequencing activities in the dramatic play area may involve adding materials over time so that increasingly complex imaginative play might occur. For instance, a teacher might begin the school year by setting up the dramatic play area as a home with materials familiar to the children. Later a cash register, pretend coins, and grocery bags can be included to transform the area into a grocery store. And finally, stuffed animals and “medical” equipment could be added to change the store to a veterinary clinic.

A child might not participate because he is not interested in a particular topic or activity, or he has difficulty with it. To increase participation in writing, for example, a teacher may have children plant a marigold first and then write “marigold” on a plant label.

Introduce the video.

Let’s see how this teacher planned ahead of time to support children at transition time by introducing active movements following a quiet activity.

VIDEO 

DISCUSSION 

Possible questions:

- How did the teacher plan this sequence of activities?
- How did this invisible support assist children’s participation?
- Any other ideas?

Possible answers:

- The teacher selected a child to choose the movement activity.
- The teachers made sure everyone—teaching staff and children—knew which tables to transition to. This resulted in a transition that was smooth and quick.





LEARNING ACTIVITY:

SCENARIO

In this activity, participants generate ideas on how to use invisible supports, then record their ideas on the handout. This activity may be completed individually or in small groups.

HANDOUT

Distribute the *Scenario* handout and review directions.

DISCUSSION

If desired, have participants share answers in a large group.

OPTIONAL

LEARNING ACTIVITY:

MIND MAP

In this activity, participants generate ideas for their own use of invisible support.

NOTE

Presenter notes for this optional learning activity are located at the end of this document, after the closing slide.

REVIEW



Curriculum modification promotes participation.

Invisible Support is purposeful and planned.

- Sequence turns
- Sequence activities

SLIDE 14: REVIEW

A curriculum modification is a small change that can make a big impact on a child's level of participation in your classroom.

Invisible support is one of eight general types of curriculum modifications. Strategies include sequencing turns and sequencing activities within an activity or learning center.

The goal for teachers is to maximize the participation of individual children based on their unique needs. The use of invisible support is one way a teacher can promote engagement and learning.

HANDOUT

Distribute handouts if not distributed during presentation. Based on participant roles:

- Distribute and review *Tips for Teachers*.
- Distribute and review *Tools for Supervisors*.
- Distribute the *Helpful Resources* handout and review key resources.

NOTE

In-service suites are available for each of the eight types of modifications. Refer to these as needed, based on your participants' level of understanding of curriculum modifications.

FOLLOW-UP ACTIVITY: SHARE THE FOLLOWING SUGGESTIONS WITH PARTICIPANTS:

- Work with a team member from your classroom to determine which children in your class might benefit from the use of invisible support.
- Make a plan. (See optional learning activity below.)
- Determine who will be in charge of tasks (collect props for dramatic play, change seating arrangements, determine sequence of an art activity).
- Give it a try!





SLIDE 15: CLOSING

Provide participants with NCQTL contact information and encourage them to visit our website for additional resources.

OPTIONAL



LEARNING ACTIVITY: MIND MAP

Suggested placement is after Slide 13.

In this optional learning activity, participants generate ideas for invisible support and then select several that are applicable to their situation. A handout is included for participants to record their ideas.

HANDOUT

Distribute the *Mind Map* handout and review directions.

Assign one or two classroom areas to each group.

DISCUSSION

Have participants share their ideas with the large group.

Record the group's ideas on a mind map drawn on a large piece of paper or a dry erase board.