

Using Coaching Strategies to Support Coachees

Joyce Escorcia: Hello, everyone! I am Joyce Escorcia with the National Center on Early Childhood Development, Teaching, and Learning, or the NCECDL. Thank you so much for joining us today for our latest installment of the Coaching Corner Webinar Series. Today, I'm joined in this webinar by our special guest expert and experienced coach, Dr. Darbianne Shannon from the University of Florida.

Dr. Shannon is an assistant research scientist at the University of Florida in the Anita Zucker Center for Excellence and Childhood Studies, and she has been engaged in research in practice-based coaching framework for the past seven years as a coach providing direct support to preschool teachers, including those who work in Head Start, and also around the Pyramid Model and embedded instruction teaching practices as a researcher focused on fidelity of implementation of PBC and for mechanisms for systems change that include PBC. She was also a part of the National Center for Quality Teaching and Learning, or the NCQTL team, that developed and implemented practice-based coaching leadership academies and practice-based coaching coach training throughout the U.S.

So, we are so excited to have her expertise and just to hear from her experience today. So, just as a reminder, the Coaching Corner Webinar Series occurs every other month, and we go ahead and invite you to mark your calendars for our next episode, which is going to be January the 22nd of 2020 at 3 p.m. Eastern, and the goal of every episode is to support you as a coach in your role. We're really exploring topics that are relevant to you and your role by identifying resources and strategies specific to our topic and putting into practice what we learn through scenarios, videos, and opportunities to ask questions and discussion. So again, thank you all for taking an hour out of your day to join us today.

And now before we begin, I just want to go over some information about the webinar. So, we're going to be using some of the features of the webinar platform just to help us interact a little bit. So, at the bottom of your screen, you're going to notice some widgets, and you see them there on the PowerPoint as well. So, if you have any tech questions, please enter them into the Q&A widget, and a copy of today's slide deck, and additional resources, are going to be available in the resource list. And so, if you haven't already done so, may want to download those and the handouts for today. And then throughout the session, we invite you also to use the idea widget, and so that's going to be the yellow widget.

And so, there there's already been a question kind of populated in there for you just about what kind ... Some examples of how you're using coaching strategies. So, anytime during the webinar, please put those in there and share with others that are on the webinar as well. And so, each of these widgets, just as a reminder, they're all resizeable and movable on your screen. So, you can really kind of customize your webinar experience, and then also you can find a closed caption widget in both English and in Spanish, and then each of these widgets are both resizeable and movable as well. And so finally, if you have any trouble, try refreshing your browser by pressing F5, and then just be sure to log off of your VPN and exit out of any other browser. Sometimes this can help as well with any lag that you may experience.

And at the end of the presentation, we just want you to be able to walk away with being able to define and describe coaching strategies, being able to discuss when and how to use those strategies, and then also identify resources that could support the use of those coaching strategies with coachees.

And we ask a question on MyPeers, and the question was, "Which engagement coaching strategies are you most comfortable with using?" And so, we thank you guys that participated in our poll on MyPeers, and here you see kind of the results, what we heard from you. We heard that the majority were comfortable with using video recording and reviewing, and then next up was modeling, and then also we had verbal and gestural support and also side-by-side, and we're going to be kind of digging into those different strategies today and kind of talking with Darby about coaching strategies, about using those coaching strategies in a variety of ways. So, we're excited to get started today.

And so, before we kind of dive into the content today, we want to just talk a little bit about the difference between a teaching practice and a coaching strategy. And so, as you know, the effective teaching or home-visiting practices are at the center of the PBC framework, and those are statements of the actions or behaviors of teachers or home visitors that support child learning. And so, we can think of a teaching practice as what we see or hear teachers or home visitors do in the classroom, during a home visit or socialization, but thinking about home visiting as well, normally those are those things that the home visitor would do to support the parent because they are supporting or teaching their children. And so, we just kind of wanted to clarify that.

And so, for example, a teacher or home visitor could use a behavior-specific praise. That's a high-leverage effective teaching practice across a number of different activities to reinforce, kind of, children for demonstrating skills in the classroom or home environment and also to let families know what they're doing well to support their child's learning in the home. And then kind of where our conversation is going to focus in on today: Coaching strategies are how the coach interacts with the coachee and the children during the observation and reflection and feedback meeting.

So, coaching strategy tells the coachee to plan for, use, and enhance their implementation of those effective teaching practices. And so, the things that we want to see or hear the coachee do during transition there. We're going to kind of transition over a little bit to hear from Darby, and she's going to kind of help us to explore the coaching strategies used within PBT. So Darby, I'm going to hand it off to you.

Darbianne Shannon: Sure. Thanks so much, Joyce, and I really appreciate that you sort of kicked off our conversation by talking about the difference between teaching practices and coaching strategies because I think that oftentimes those can feel kind of mixed up or jumbled when we're implementing them.

So, just to reiterate what you said that the teaching practice is what we will see or hear teachers do, and coaching strategies are what we're going to see or hear coaches do in the coaching debrief meeting or potentially during the observation as well. And so, we have a variety of different coaching strategies, and these can all be implemented both during the

focused observation as well as during the reflection and debrief meeting. And so, we can use it at lots of different times to really support the teacher's learning.

And so, what we know about practice-based coaching is that it's in an evidence-based coaching framework, and what that means is we have a good bit of research that tells us about, what are the outcomes, both for teachers and for children, when we use these coaching strategies with fidelity or as intended? And so, as you can see from the chart, and also on your handout, when we think about coaching strategies, we think about them in sort of two categories, and the first category is essential coaching strategies.

And so, we see those on your charts, and they're shown on the screen. And so, the essential coaching strategies that are on the left side are ones that we want to use in every single coaching session. So, every time I go to meet with a teacher, I'm always going to engage in observation, that focused observation of what the teacher is doing in the classroom related to her action plan or his action plan. During the debrief meeting, I'm also always going to engage in reflective conversation and provide that teacher with a bit of supportive and constructive feedback about what he or she is doing really well or could enhance related to those particular teaching practices. And I also always want to leave them with a resource or material that's going to support them to continue to grow and to learn.

And so, if I'm saying I'm doing practice-based coaching with fidelity, then every single time I meet with the teacher, I'm going to use those essential strategies. I know you guys have talked quite a bit about those. And so, beyond our essential strategies, we also want to think about what we call enhancement strategies, and enhancement strategies are those strategies that we don't necessarily need to use every time we meet with the teacher, but we would use them with a teacher, or a home visitor, when we really think that we can enhance their learning experience and their participation in coaching by using them.

And so, when we think about, you know, there's a whole list of strategies I could use to enhance, which one should I use? Well, then I'm going to really focus in on, well, what's the teacher's action plan, or what is that home visitor really focusing on trying to implement with the family? Because the goal that they have set for themselves is going to guide you to think about which enhancement strategies I should be using, and beyond that you also might need to think about program requirements.

So, for example, video recording might be allowed in some programs and some homes but maybe not acceptable in others. And so, for example, if I was thinking about supporting someone with behavior-specific praise, we used that example earlier talking about a teaching practice, I could select an enhancement strategy to really help either the family or the teacher to think about how they're using that behavior-specific praise, and we'll take a look at that in a little bit.

And so, just keep in mind that as your partnership with the coachee develops and really strengthens over time that you'll be able to adjust and have conversations with them about what strategies they like best and how they really want to be supported. And so, as we move through, we will always use those essential strategies, but we're going to dig in more today about enhancement strategies and when and how to use those.

Joyce: Thank you, Darby, for sharing that. And again, we are so excited to have you with us today, and we often get a lot of questions about the use of coaching strategies, and we've compiled some of those questions that we're going to ask you today just to get kind of some of your insight throughout our time together. And so, the first question that often comes up is, "How long after I begin coaching can I start using those coaching strategies?" And so, we just wanted to see kind of what your thoughts were on that.

Darbianne: Yeah, well, the great news about it is you can use them from the very first day of coaching. And so, when you initially meet for that welcome meeting or, you know, kick-off or get started meeting with your teacher, one strategy you'll want to be sure to use right off the bat is reflection because that's going to help us to learn a little bit about that teacher's background and his or her experience or what the home visitor is hoping to get out of the coaching process, and also a little bit about the routines that they're typically using.

And so, reflection is one that you can use from the very beginning, and then when you have that first focused observation and really start the coaching cycle, you're going to use that supportive and constructive feedback, reflection, and providing resources and materials every single time you meet with them. So, the great news is you can sort of start right away, and you can't really have a coaching session without having coaching strategies because it's how we help the teachers to be engaged. So, the good news is this is something you can use from really day one of coaching.

Joyce: Yeah. Thank you for that, Darby, and that is good news to, you know, know you can kind of start out and be right, you know, kind of, in using those, that there's no kind of waiting period, or anything specific like that. And so, at this point, you know, our participants out there may be wondering how to decide which coaching strategies to use and how to engage your coachees and the process of selecting coaching strategies.

And so, we're just going to talk a little bit more about that now. And so, one way to find out about the support the coachee is comfortable with receiving is by having the coachee rate, kind of, their comfort with different coaching strategies during the welcome meeting or coaching kick-off. And so, it's important to be transparent with the coachee about the essential coaching strategies that they can expect – that they can expect to experience from their coach that they're going to use in a session, and then it's also important to kind of recognize and identify maybe those things that they aren't as comfortable with.

And so, on the screen here, you're going to see a tool that has been a part of your resources for the webinar. And so, if you haven't already, we'll just kind of remind you again that you can print those off or download those and save those to your computer. And so, this tool can really be used to facilitate a discussion with the coachee about their comfort with the menu of kind of different coaching strategies and can really help to facilitate that dialogue between you as the coach and those of your coachee. And so, now that we've kind of ...

Darbianne: Joyce. Joyce, I was just going to add one other thing. I was just going to say that, you know, in every program we use sort of a different coaching log or coaching protocols to guide our interactions with the teacher, but one thing that I always try to do as I'm, like, wrapping up my coaching sessions or home-visiting session is to say, you know, "Next time we're going to be

working on your action plan around this particular practice, and I'm wondering if there are any coaching strategies you'd like for me to use, or any particular ways in which you want to be supported?"

And so, it's definitely a conversation I'd have up front during the welcome or, like, kick-off, but I also try to bring it up at the end of every coaching session just to see if there's anything else new that they want to try out or that would really help them as a learner.

Joyce: Now, I think ... Thank you for bringing that up. I think that's a great idea, and I know sometimes with the coach trainings and things, we encourage, you know, to kind of write notes as your preparing for your kind of reflection and feedback and thinking about planning for your future meetings. So, if you're just kind of starting out, you might even want to jot that down to, you know, remember to, kind of, to bring that back up. So, thank you for sharing that as well.

And so, now that we've reviewed kind of the essential versus the enhancement strategies and talked a bit more about how to get started with the coachee, so we want to dig in and think together with everyone in here about when and how you may use those enhancement strategies. So, we're going to dig into that a little bit more. And then, just as a reminder, that these coaching strategies can be used throughout the entire PBT cycle. And so, just note that this isn't just like one kind of isolated thing to use at one specific time, but this is something that's used throughout the PBT cycle. And here, this is just some examples.

So, what you see here is a feedback statement. And so, again this is an essential coaching strategy that the coach is providing about the coachee's use of praise statements in the classroom. And so, we see those examples here. We see our first bubble. It says, you know, "Your action plan is focused on providing behavior-specific praise." And then our next example says, you know, "Today, I heard five behavior-specific praise statements, and then I also heard 15 general praise statements." And so, again, these are just some examples of some feedback statements that you could use.

And so, now we want to consider some of the enhancement coaching strategies that we might use when delivering this feedback. And so, we wanted to kind of pause here and just hear from you, kind of, "What are some of those things that you could use with your coachee?" And so, here we have a poll. You're going to have the poll pop up there on your side. And so, which coaching strategies could you use with your coachee? Is it graphic feedback, role-play, modeling, or all of the above? But just a little quiz here to get us started. So, what is that coaching strategy that you could use with your coachee?

And so, you're just going to respond You can click on those, and again, A, B, C, or D, all of the above. And just give us a second to kind of respond, and we can kind of see our results as they come in. And then I see, like, everyone, I think, answered kind of quick and fast, and the good news is that, you know, that all of them are right. And so, the majority of those in the poll, that's what you said. So, everyone's a winner. So, you're right: all of the above, that all of those coaching strategies can be used with coachees.

Darbianne: Yeah, and I think what's important to note, you know, Joyce, you said earlier that coaching strategies are often used in combination. And so, when I was looking at those feedback statements, I saw, you know, I saw opportunities for facilitating reflection. I saw

opportunities for providing supportive feedback and constructive feedback, but we know that we don't always want for our feedback to be verbal because we want for teachers to be able to see and reflect on their own data, and so using a combination of different strategies is often really helpful in supporting teachers as learners. So, you cannot just have to take one. You can actually use a couple different ones.

Joyce: Yeah, and when you said that you wouldn't have to use kind of the same combination every time, but it's really kind of tailored to the, one, to what you're supporting, kind of that practice, and also the preference of the coachee at that time.

Darbianne: Absolutely. Yep.

Joyce: OK. And so, now we want to talk a little bit more about how each of these different enhancement strategies could support the coachee to learn more about praise statements. We're going to dig into each one of these. And so, one option would be to use graphic feedback to support the coachee to see, reflect on, or even analyze the data being shared. And so, graphic feedback is providing a visual display of data and specific verbal information to the coachee about his or her implementation.

Graphic performance feedback always includes kind of helping to interpret and analyze the graph with the coachee and providing both supportive and constructive feedback. And so, for the example before, using this graph to provide feedback, you know, we kind of want to orient the coachee to the graph by letting him or her know when and how I collected the data and what the bars represent, and so this data was recorded by the coach using kind of frequency counting, tallying the number of times the coachee used the general praise statements and then the number of times the coachee used behavior-specific praise, which is the practice selected for the action plan.

And so, the data were collected across two observations, and so by graphing the data, it can really help the coachee to quickly identify trends, including strengths or maybe areas for enhancement. And also a review of the data might be used during debriefing sessions to revise or even add support to the action plan. And so for here, it's really important to kind of be sure that you go through and talk through, like, what is it that, you know, we're looking at, and to help the coachee understand, "What is it telling me?" And ...

Darbianne: So ... Oh, I was going to talk in right there. So, I think ...

Joyce: Oh, no, no, go for it. I was just going to ask you ...

Darbianne: Yeah. So, I think your point about orienting folks to the graph is such an important one because even if they've seen graphs for different purposes, for child data or even their own practice before, they don't know specifically what it is that you collected data on in that day and in that moment. And so, just letting them know that, you know, your action plan is focused on behavior-specific praise.

And so, I collected the number of times I saw you use that, both last week and this week, and let's take a look at it. And so, that might be one way to get started, and then one thing I always try to do is to invite the coachee to reflect first. And so, as they were looking at that graph, and I'm going to flip back to it for just a second, I might draw their attention to, you know, the

change over time, and I might say, "Looking just at the part around behavior-specific praise, what do you notice about last week's observation to this week's observation?" And really helping them kind of target in or zoom in and think about, "Oh, my gosh, you know what? This week I did four more statements of behavior-specific praise than I did last week."

And really helping them to kind of celebrate that before we move to saying something like, "What I'm also noticing is that there's a difference between the number of behavior-specific praise statements and general praise statements, and then just inviting the teacher to talk to me a little bit about, you know, when you're using behavior-specific praise, or how you decide when to use it. And so, I would really use that graph to invite the coachee to reflect on their practice and to really think about what it is that they're doing.

And I also, when they are reflecting, would try to be ready with some direct quotes or examples of the things that I saw or heard them say just to be sure that when they are sharing their insights that I'm able to acknowledge them and give them some specific feedback about the things they're thinking about. And so, that kind of brown circle that we have up there is just a reminder to all of us that any time we provide a teacher or a home visitor with a graph that we want to use it both for supportive in addition to constructive feedback. And so, data can feel sometimes comfortable for folks and sometimes a little bit scary.

And so, remembering that any time you're putting a graph in front of folks, we never want it to be a gotcha moment, that we want to be sure that it's something that's used both to celebrate their progress but then also to help them think about some ways to enhance their implementation. And then the last thing is that sometimes I have teachers that will focus on that constructive feedback first.

And so, if they look at this graph and they go, "Oh, my gosh, I'm doing so many more general praise statements than I am behavior-specific praise, like, I'm really trying, but it's tough for me to remember not just to say good job." In that situation, when that happens, you want to acknowledge that they're able to be self-reflective, but also remind them that there are strengths here and that from that observation one to observation two, they actually have made progress, and then think together about what supports you can put in place either on their action plan or visual keys that you could use that would help them to increase that behavior-specific praise over time.

So, lots of different things that can be done with graphic feedback, and it can be used for reflection and supportive and constructive and might lead to other problem-solving conversations, too. So, for a lot of different reasons.

Joyce: Yeah. Thank you, Darby, and we just had a couple of just questions come up in the Q&A box. And so, one was, "So, if someone is already kind of started coaching and started using some of the coaching strategies, could they use that resource that we just shared with them?" You know, if they were already kind of in the midst of coaching and now kind of thinking about where we are in the year, you know, most with us probably have, and so wouldn't you say that they could definitely use that resource or that tool that we just shared to kind of reflect on where they were in their current practice?

Darbianne: Yeah. I think sometimes, like, when you develop a new action plan, it's a really nice time to check in on, what are your preferred coaching strategies? Because I feel like every time you close down an action plan and start a new one, it's an opportunity to kind of check in as a partnership and really think about where you're at and what's going well and what maybe can we tweak?

And so, I think giving them that list of strategies is perfectly fine. I think the other thing you could do is, as the coach, kind of plan ahead and think about, you know, two or three strategies that you think would be really beneficial for the teacher and say, you know, "Some that I'm thinking about are, you know, role-play and modeling. I'm wondering if any of those would be OK with you next week?" So, I think providing with the form, checking in on action plans, and then also potentially just giving them a choice at the end of every coaching meeting.

Joyce: Yeah. Thank you for clarifying, and then the other one that I think you just touched on, the other question that came up was, you know, is that the resource that we just shared, is that something that can be shared with coachees, with those that are receiving coaching? And so, we definitely say yes to that, you know, because that's what you could use to help facilitate the conversation.

Darbianne: Absolutely.

Joyce: OK. Well, great. Well keep the questions coming. We're kind of filtering through some of those, and we will try to get to as many of those as we can as we're kind of going along. And so, now we're going to kind of keep things moving a little bit, and we want to kind of dig in a little bit into some modeling and role-playing. And so, modeling and role-playing, those are both enhancement coaching strategies and can often be confused, but they're a bit different. So, we just wanted to talk about that for just a few minutes. And so, modeling can be verbal, gestural, physical, or signed actions that demonstrate how to implement a teaching or home-visiting practice, but in a modeling situation, the coach works with the child or children and/or family and demonstrates how to do a certain practice.

So, if a coach were modeling the use of behavior-specific praise, they might step in during the observation and provide behavior-specific praise to children following the appropriate behavior. So, the coach and the coachee would plan the use of the strategy in the session prior to the coach actually doing it because again it's all a part of that creating that safe place and that collaborative partnership. So, you want to be sure that all of these things are clearly planned ahead and that everyone is comfortable with what's going to happen. And so, you want to be sure that the coachee is in kind of close proximity and observes the coach's behavior. And so, kind of bringing it back to you and kind of your experience, Darby, do you have any tips or anything as far as modeling for our coaches that are listening today?

Darbianne: Sure. So, I think one of the things that I feel silly to say, but I think is important, is that modeling is only effective if the home visitor or the teacher is there to see it. And so, when we're in classrooms and we become really engaged in, you know, whatever is going on, we want to be sure that if we are modeling the practice for the teacher that the teacher is, like you said, in close proximity and right there to observe, and one of the ways that I try to keep that teacher actively engaged when I am modeling something in the classroom is giving them a

strategy or something specific to look at or think about as I model. And so, I might have them actually take some data or tally marks or write down some notes about the things they see or hear me do when I'm modeling a practice with a child.

So, then it helps them to be really accountable for what's occurring during the model. The other thing that I want to think about is that I want the coachees to have an opportunity to practice using that skill right after I model. And so, it might be, like, "OK. Watch me do it." And then I provide that behavior-specific praise statement, for example, teaching practice, and then right after I do it, I might have the teacher do it so I could see or hear that teacher or home visitor practicing the use of that practice, as well right after. And so, I want to be sure that they're actively watching, have an opportunity to practice. And then the last thing is that orange circle down at the bottom.

It's really being sure that when I model something for the coachee, whether it be a home visitor or a teacher in a classroom, that I'm being thoughtful about their kind of zone of proximal development and what they're ready to do because what I don't want to do is model for them something that is kind of so perfect or so pie-in-the-sky that they think, "I could never do that." And so, what we want to be thoughtful about is taking teaching practices or strategies that we can use in the classroom that are just sort of one step further from what they're currently doing to make sure that anything that we are modeling is serving as a helpful tool versus something that makes the teacher feel more frustrated. But certainly modeling is a very beneficial strategy and can be done both, you know, live, in person, but also during the debrief if I had, for example, just said, you know, "Next time when you're in that situation, you might say ..."

And I could do a verbal model or could even use a video of another classroom during a debrief meeting as a model for how to implement a practice. And so, those are a couple of things that I think about, but just being sure that when you use modeling that it's because it meets the needs of that individual teacher and the teacher practice that they're focused on.

Joyce: Yeah. Definitely. Thank you for that, Darby. And so, now kind of thinking about kind of the role play, or, kind of you know, kind of the flip side of that that it's sometimes confused with. When we think about role-play, you know, in a role-playing situation, both individuals take on, you know, a defined role and they implement a practice or respond to the implementation, right?

And so, the coachee might take on the role of the child while the coach demonstrates a practice, or the coach might take on the role of a child while the coachee implements a certain practice. And so, role-playing can be really helpful to try out, you know, practice before implementing it in the classroom or even in the home, and if a coach and a coachee decide to use the role-play strategy, then the coach and the coachee would act out the use of, say, you know, kind of based on our examples, you know, behavior-specific praise during the debrief meeting. And so, Darby, here, do you have any tips for using role-play? Now that we've talked about kind of the modeling piece, do you have any tips about role-playing?

Darbianne: Yeah, and I think, you know, the big difference between modeling and role-play is that the modeling is what I do when I'm with the children and showing the teacher how to interact directly with the kiddos, but when I think about role-play, it could be that I'm

supporting a home visitor to really think about, before they go in to meet with the family, what are the actions or words that they might use? Or helping a teacher when we're in our debrief meeting to really think about, "Next time I'm in a small group with my kiddos, what is it that I might say or do?"

And so, role-play typically happens during that debrief meeting versus in the classroom or in the home, as you mentioned, and it typically occurs with other strategies because it's really about helping the teacher to practice implementing that teaching practice. And so, we have an example on the screen that says, "For example, you might say, today when you asked Jamarie to walk safely to the carpet and he did, you said, good job." And so, I'm really taking data directly from my focused observation notes, and then helping the teacher to reflect by saying, "If I were Jamarie, how might you change that good job into a behavior-specific praise statement to let me know what I did that was good?"

And in that situation, if I was the coach saying that, I'm taking on the role of Jamarie, the child, and I'm having the teacher take on the role of the teacher or perhaps the home visitor. And so, really thinking about what would they say directly to the child. So, that's the big difference between those two, and I think that role-play provides a really safe context for teachers to, or for home visitors to, demonstrate that practice and to receive some feedback and sort of try it out before they need to use it with a family or with a child.

And so, it's not always going to be, you know, a big production where you have to set up roles or put on costumes or anything, but really thinking about when it's appropriate for the teacher and when it's appropriate for the practice that they're focused on, really helping that coachee to think about, "What is it going to look like or sound like when I do this teaching practice or interactional practice?"

Joyce: Yeah. Thank you for that, Darby, and we had a question come in from Irene, and she did say, "Now, what if modeling doesn't work with the teacher?" So, what if it's just not successful? What would you suggest, maybe trying a different strategy?

Darbianne: Well, I think I would first kind of question, did you try modeling in the classroom or try modeling in the debrief? So, there's kind of two different locations you could model, and then I might consider, you know, if it's not effective for the coach to model for the teacher, maybe, you know, looking at a classroom across the hall and using that other teacher as a model, or maybe looking at a video which can also serve as a model for how to implement practices.

And so, the benefit of the coach sort of not being the modeler but being the person that is side-by-side with the teacher as they watch the model is they can point out the things that either the teacher in the video or the home visitor is doing really well and can help the coachee to kind of understand what it is that they're seeing and why the practices they're observing are really important.

So, I think if you really want to do modeling, you could think about observing others or watching a video, but if that's still not working, then, Joyce, you're absolutely right. We could pick a million different coaching strategies. There's lots of different ways to support.

Joyce: Yeah. Definitely. And our Q&A bin is really active, and there was one other question that Beth asked, and it's come up quite a bit in MyPeers and even in coach trainings and things, is, you know, any tips for encouraging people to really kind of participate and take part in the role-playing? Because what Beth says is she finds people are kind of reluctant, and then it kind of ends up being just they're kind of talking about the practice instead of an actual role-play, and that question comes up quite a bit. I didn't know if you had any tips there.

Darbianne: Yeah. I think with that one, I always try to ground it in the data because I don't want it to feel artificial or like a silly exercise. I really want for it to feel like just-in-time support around something that I observed in the classroom. And so, like the example on the screen, I'm bringing it to the teacher with data about exactly what it was that I observed in the classroom, and then really, you know, without setting it up just saying, you know, "If I were that child, what might you do differently next time?"

And I think that that is probably true in the home visiting context as well is, you know, just really grounding it in the data and starting with, "This is what I've observed you doing as far as home visiting practices interacting with the family, and I'm wondering, you know, if I was the family, what might you say to me or how might you support me in the future?" That's the easiest way, I think, to get started with the role-play.

And of course it can always go the other way, too, where the coachee is serving as the family or as the child, and then you're modeling for them how to interact, and it just means that they'll have to take on that role of either the family or the coachee, which can sometimes be a little bit more difficult than just asking them to keep their role but think through the words or phrases or actions they might take to support you as a learner.

Joyce: Yeah, definitely. Thank you for that, and thank you, Beth, for that question, as well, because that's a question that I hear often as we're kind of out and about supporting different regions and things. And so, we know that it's not possible to use every enhancement strategy in every session, right? So, now let's think together about ... Because we only have so much time, and so let's think about how the coach can decide which strategy to use, and also how can they use the strategies. So, we kind of want to talk about that for just a few minutes.

Let me minimize my Q&A box here. And one of the questions — one of the questions that we did is, you know, how often should I use an enhancement coaching strategy with my coachee? And so, Darby, what would you say to that?

Darbianne: Well, I think that this is going to depend a lot on the preferences of the coachee and what really motivates them and what they feel is most supportive. And so, we know that we are always going to use the essential strategies. So, we're always going to do observation, supportive and constructive feedback, reflective conversation and providing resources, and if you do those things really well, you don't always have to use an enhancement strategy in every coaching session.

So, you should only use them when you think they're really going to enhance the learner's experience and really benefit them in their understanding of how to implement that particular teaching or home visiting practice. And so, when you're making that decision you'll go back to the action plan goal and really think about, "What is it that is our goal, and what are we trying

to achieve together, and is there a strategy that's going to help this teacher or home visitor to have a deeper reflection or to understand the practice in a new and different way or to expand the way in which they are using it to generalize across more children or different contexts in the home or classroom environment?"

And so, I think, don't feel like you have to use an enhancement strategy every time, but if you are going to use it, think about the preferences or motivations of the coachee that you're working with, and then think about what the action plan goal is and how you really using coaching strategies can enhance the coachee's understanding. And the other thing, you know, that I think some programs do is they actually build in to their coaching log or coaching protocol that they're going to use some strategies like video or modeling, for example, if they think those are really important every session, or every third session, and so that's an option, too, is that you potentially could say, "We want for all of our coaches to plan to collect video observation data at least once during each action plan."

Or another group that I'm working with is really focused on helping teachers with assistive technology. And so, part of their protocol is to always model the use of that AT every time they're working with a family member or with a teacher. And so, it's really going to depend on the individual learner and the practices that you're focused on.

Joyce: And thank you for that, Darby. And so ... I've got a little bit of lag here. So, now we just want to take a look at a few more coaching enhancement strategies. And so, here we just want to talk a second about environmental arrangement. And so, when we talk about environmental arrangement, it's when the coach assists the coachee with creating and/or adapting their environment to support the use of practices identified in their action plan.

And so, this might include engaging the coachee in discussion in the environment. Even during your reflection time, you're talking about, "So, what, you know, what are some things that we could do?" Assisting the coachee in making changes to the environment or even rearranging the physical space. And so, here in this picture, you can kind of see the home visitor. So this is, you know, an example of the home visitor, you know, there with the family that, you know, she's supporting the family to arrange the environment to give the child opportunities to engage in, you know, cognitive problem-solving.

And so, we can see the home visitor in the yellow shirt, and she's helped the family to kind of collect materials from the family's home to set the occasion for the child to problem-solve around the concepts, you know, of in and out. So, that's just a little bit of an example there about an environmental arrangement. And so, Darby, when we're thinking about environmental arrangement, what are some of the tips for coaches when they're thinking about using this enhancement strategy?

Darbianne: Yeah. I actually really love the photo that you just had up because it's clear that the home visitor there is really thinking about what materials or resources are available in that home that can be used to support the child's learning, knowing that we don't want to bring in our bag of toys, that we really want to think about, "What are materials that are going to be available to use for the child and family in their everyday activities and routines?"

And then really helping that home visitor to plan for, how could they, you know, physically arrange the environment? And so, even something as simple as, you know, modeling by sitting on the floor and then inviting the parents to sit on the floor so that they're all at eye level with the child could be something that is an environmental arrangement but something that maybe they had planned for ahead of time. And so, I noticed that we did have a question about, you know, how could you give a home visitor an opportunity to practice a modeled skill on the same home visit?

And so, in the situation of a home visitor, I probably would not be right there side-by-side with them in the home visit, but each grantee is different. In that situation, I might have a video of a home visitor, and we could, you know, talk ahead of time about how they could talk to the family about the practice we're going to use, and then we might engage in a role-play so that they have the opportunity to get practice with that modeled behavior. And so, certainly across the different contexts in which we work, whether it be a family child care home or a classroom or a home-visiting setting, we might have to tweak or adapt these strategies, but rest assured that each one of them will work for all of those contexts.

You just have to be a little bit creative about them. And so, of course you want to be sure you're using those materials from the home as we saw in that picture. The other thing that we want to think about is making sure that whoever is going to be working with that child really knows when and how to use that environmental arrangement again in the future.

And so, if it's something that I as the coach am there supporting them to implement in the moment, in the classroom, or in the home setting, then I would also want to be sure to have a conversation with them during our debriefing or during our reflective conversation about, you know, how they could generalize that practice and use environmental arrangement again in the future when they're playing with the child or when they're interacting with them.

And then finally just making sure that any environmental arrangement that I'm recommending or suggesting to the family that I'm checking back in with them to say, "How is that working for you? Is it something that feels feasible or comfortable?" Because if the answer is no and they don't like the way I've arranged the environment or they don't think the thing that I'm modeling for them is going to work or helping them to set up is going to work, then they're not going to use it in the future. And so, just always checking back in to make sure that the coachee feels like the arrangement we've come up with is going to be a good one.

Joyce: OK. Thank you for that, Darby, and I think that kind of ties in to ... We had a question come up in the Q&A about, you know, what if staff were kind of reluctant to the strategy and kind of, you know, things related to their, you know, classroom and those environments, and I think what you just mentioned is so important that always kind of doing a check-in and saying, "OK. So, you know, how are we feeling about this?" And so, they feel they're a part of the process. Wouldn't you say that that would kind of help with buy-in on some of these strategies?

Darbianne: Absolutely. And you know what? Sometimes when it's a big change, like rearranging a center in a classroom, I will tell the teacher, "Give it one week. I will help you set it up. Let's give it one week and really try it out and give it, you know, a fair chance, and I'll be here to support you, and if it doesn't feel right after you and the kids have had a chance to kind of

engage with the materials in this way for a week, then we'll change it back, or we'll think of something different."

And so, I think any time I introduce an environmental arrangement, we're making our very best guess based on all the things that we know about early childhood, about what's going to support the children in that environment best, but if it's not working for the grown-ups, then we need to know that, too, and so sometimes I'll say, "Let's just give it a try, and we could always change it again if we need to."

Joyce: Yeah. Great. Thank you for that, Darby. And so, we know it's often helpful in introducing environmental arrangements to pair them with, you know, other strategies like modeling or side-by-side, verbal or gestural feedback. You know, so that lets the coachee know how to use that new material and how to implement the teaching practice. So, you want to take just a few minutes to kind of dig a little deeper into those as well. And also, to hear from you, Darby. And so, when we're thinking about verbal support, it's provided by the coach to the coachee about the implementation of a teaching or home-visiting practice while the coachee is implementing the practice.

So, the coach delivers verbal prompts or cues to remind them to use a specific practice or practices. You know, for example, a coachee has a goal around providing transition warnings five minutes before the transition occurs. So, the coach and the coachee might agree to a signal like having the coachee tap the wrist when the coachee is looking kind of to prompt the coachee to give the classroom transition warning, right? So, you know, the coach says, "OK. So, you know, I'm just going to tap my wrist, and that's going to be our signal." And so, verbal support kind of differs from modeling in that the coach's comment is directed to the coachee and not the child. So, modeling involves the coach interacting directly with the child, you know, or the family.

Darbianne: Yeah. So, like, I think ... Oh. I was ... Can you pop back for just a second?

Joyce: Yeah. Definitely.

Darbianne: I was going to say, I mean, we have that example about, like, tapping the wristwatch, but I was also looking at this image of the two grown-ups and the little guy in the water pool, and I was thinking, you know, I can really easily see here where the coach is positioned behind the child, and she might be prompting that other adult around, you know, holding preferred toys within sight but out of reach, right? Which is going to encourage the child to request the cars and trucks. And so, in that situation, the coach is providing both a model of the language, as well as the reminder about the teaching practice at just the right time when that coachee needs to be using it. So, I think that visual is actually a really nice example too of that side-by-side verbal support and observation.

Joyce: Uh-huh. Great, Darby. [Overlap talking] Thanks for pointing that out.

Darbianne: OK. Now we can go to the next one. Yeah.

Joyce: Yeah, and just one quick question that kind of came up was, you know, can you use these strategies together? So like, for example, could you use graphic performance feedback to illustrate, you know, things related to environmental arrangement? And ...

Darbianne: Well, yeah. So, I could, like, in this one, if the environmental arrangement that I was working with the coachee on was about having preferred items within sight, but out of reach, then I might ... And that is arranging the environment, then I might tally or take data on how many times the coachee, you know, held those materials within sight but out of reach, and then I could graph those tallies to say, "You did it, you know, four times at meal time and three times at water table and, you know, three times at block center." So, you for sure could use them together.

Joyce: OK. Thank you for that, and again I love how active our Q&A box is there. And so, kind of talking about side-by-side, that gestural support, and so nonverbal or visual actions, so we kind of define this as that nonverbal or visual actions used by the coach to guide the coachee's implementation of teaching or home-visiting practices. And so, the action might be used to acknowledge the appropriate implementation of a practice or to prompt or remind a coachee to use a particular practice.

So, gestural support differs from gestural modeling in that the coach's gesture is directed to the coachee. And so, again, modeling involves the coach interacting directly with the child, you know, the children or family to provide a model for the coachee. And so, we're kind of thinking about, you know, these strategies that we just talked about. Darby, is there any kind of tips or anything that you would like to share about that?

Darbianne: Yeah. So, with those two that we just talked about, of course there are things that you're really only going to do during the focused observation. They aren't things that are super appropriate in the debrief meeting. And so, the reasons why we might use them is because they can really, you know, build the coachee's confidence that they're not sure when to use the practice. Being right there by their side to say, "Now is the time! Let's use it." Or even, you know, giving them a gesture like a big thumbs-up when they do use the practice in an appropriate context to kind of give them that boost, like, "I'm on the right track, and I'm doing it." And so, definitely use them during the observation. Use them to acknowledge or to help for just-in-time support.

They always should be things that you have talked with the teacher about, or the home visitor about, ahead of time because we want to be sure that they know what those signals mean and also that they're comfortable with you kind of popping in with that side-by-side support. And so, it's not something I would use unless I had checked in to be sure it was OK with them, and then anytime you do it, you just want to be sure that it's really quick and that it's not intrusive so that they can continue to interact with the children that they're working with. So, those are things that I'd be thinking about.

Joyce: Ah. OK. Well, thank you for that, Darby, and then just kind of leaning in to our next question that we've kind of gathered together for today, and that would be, "How do I become more confident with using coaching strategies?" Any tips for our community?

Darbianne: Yeah. Yeah, and I think, as with any part of coaching, with time, it's something that you will become more comfortable with and more fluent with, but I think first and foremost, I would say, find your coaching community, whether that's, you know, on MyPeers or a partner that is in your center or a group that meets in your grantee. Find others and talk to them about

their coaching practices. Have, you know, coaching meetings or coaching calls, and share videos and, you know, really talk about what it is that you're doing.

I think that videos are tremendously helpful, not only looking at videos in the classroom but also sharing your debriefing practice and getting feedback from others about the coaching strategies you're using during your debriefing meetings.

And so, gathering those videos and sharing with others can be really beneficial or even just watching it yourself. I have used role-play many times with other coaches that I'm working with if I have kind of tricky constructive feedback to deliver or a new form or tool that I'm trying to talk somebody through and I want to get the kinks worked out, then I might role-play so that I'm ready to use those coaching strategies, and then I always just try to leave a little bit of time for myself.

When possible, if I'm coming out of the observation, I want to have at a minimum, you know, 10 to 15 minutes where I can gather my thoughts and figure out, you know, what are the key things that I want to share with the coachee and then think through, you know, are there any essential strategies that I could use during the debrief meeting.

And so, just giving yourself that planning time before you go into the observation and before the debrief can be really beneficial. And of course your coaching log and your observation notes forms and other job aids like that will help to ensure that you're planning ahead so that you know just what to use and when to use it.

Joyce: Yeah, and I love how you mentioned kind of the planning piece because I think that's an important piece helping to build confidence, right? Because the more you're prepared, it helps kind of ease the nerves a little bit, especially if you're just kind of starting out in your coaching journey. And great segue way there, Darby.

And so, just kind of wrapping up, we wanted to point out just a couple of resources that you got today with the resources for today, and one was the coaching strategies and definitions from the National Center of Pyramid Model Innovations, and again, this is included with your resources, and we actually used the definitions from here for several of our coaching strategies for today.

And so, we wanted to point that out as a great resource, and then as Darby mentioned, a coaching log. And so, we have the tool that we introduced earlier, and then you also have this, this classroom coaching log, and while this says "classroom coaching log," you could use this when working, you know, across all settings. So, just wanted to point that out. And then of course our MyPeers community. And so, those are all great places just to, again, kind of help find that extra support and resources. And with that, Darby, we're kind of coming to the end of our time. So, I just wanted to say thank you to you for kind of sharing your time and just your expertise with us and see if there were any kind of final thoughts or ideas that you wanted to share with the group.

Darbianne: You know, I think, you know, just that this is a really important topic, and we know that because the coaching strategies are the ways in which coaches engage the coachee in planning for and using and really self-reflecting on how they're implementing teaching practices

that when you're doing these well, that it can make your coaching partnership and your coaching process just run so much more smoothly. And so, if it's a new strategy and you're a little worried about it, I'd say just do your best and try it out because with time they'll get easier, and I can assure you that your teachers or your home visitors will benefit from any one of these.

Joyce: OK. Well, thank you again so much for ...

Darbianne: Thanks so much for having me. Yeah. Thank you very much.

Joyce: Look forward to conversations in the future, and thank you to our coaching corner community for just sharing your time with us today and being so interactive with our Q&A box, and if you have any further questions, I'd just say we keep the conversation going on MyPeers. We'll be kind of posting a follow-up post there. So, if we don't see you before our next webinar, we'll see you on MyPeers, and thank you again for joining us. And just a reminder that you're going to be prompted, via the Q&A, to fill out your evaluation link, and so please, we really love to hear from you, and that really helps to guide and direct our work. So, thank you for giving us your feedback there, and we will see you next time.

Darbianne: Thank you.