

## Practice-Based Coaching Overview

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Narrator: Michelle Noelle engages with pre-K learners at her home day care. Preschool teacher Tiffany Powers starts her day in the classroom, and Lisa Brown discusses educational strategies with parents of a young learner. While their settings are different, these practitioners have the same goal: best outcomes for the children they engage with. Best outcomes are achieved when practitioners, like Michelle, are provided with professional development that supports their learning and growth.

Michelle Noelle: OK. All done? OK. Let's drink some milk so we can go and play. OK?

Narrator: One professional development coaching model used with education staff working with children and families is called practice-based coaching.

Dr. Patricia Snyder: Practice-based coaching is an approach we use to support practitioners' implementation of interactional and teaching practices with young children to support their development and learning.

Narrator: Colleagues develop practice-based coaching for practitioners, including Head Start educators, after looking at the effectiveness of other development support.

Woman: Who cooks at home?

Maureen Conroy: What we found in our research is, when you go in and you do a one-day training that might last an hour, you just gain awareness. Teachers don't actually learn the practice.

Mary Louise Hemmeter: As we were developing this model, we were really concerned about an approach to professional development for early childhood educators that would result in practice change. So practice-based coaching is a cyclical process for supporting teachers, home visitors, other early childhood practitioners to implement any set of practices that are identified and defined well.

Narrator: The coaching model can complement other forms of professional development.

Kathleen Artman Meeker: So we really see practice-based coaching as being job-embedded ongoing support for those providers in their workplaces, and it's a nice follow-up in many cases to other forms of professional development, so staff may go to a workshop or go to a conference or be in a course at their local college, and practice-based coaching can be used to

help take those practices that they learn in one setting, that they learn to recognize, learn to identify, maybe role-play with other adults, and then practice-based coaching brings it into their actual practice.

Narrator: Developers compared practice-based coaching to traditional forms of professional development around different sets of targeted teaching practices.

Patricia: We've done quite a bit of research on the impacts of practice-based coaching on teachers' implementation of evidence-based interactional and teaching practices. The teaching practices that we've specifically studied in our research include practices designed to support young children's social-emotional development and to promote positive behavior as part of the pyramid model, and we've used practice-based coaching to support practitioners' implementation of embedded instruction practices, which are practices that support the development and learning of young children with disabilities in the context of everyday activities and routines, either in their classrooms or in their homes. We've also used practice-based coaching to support people to implement what we call "best in class," which is a social-emotional set of practices designed to address young children who are at elevated risk for exhibiting persistent and sustained challenging behavior.

Man: Then it wouldn't be any fun. What we need to do is, if you know the answer, put your finger on your nose as fast as possible, so if I...

Narrator: Developers have researched whether practice-based coaching results in implementation of identified practices.

Mary: As professional development models go, practice-based coaching has a strong research base. We have evidence that it not only changes teacher practice, but we also have evidence that teachers continue to implement those practices even after their coaching has ended.

Joyce Escorcia: The Head Start Program Performance Standards provide some guidance regarding coaching. The Performance Standards tell us that each program must implement a research-based coordinated coaching strategy. Practice-based coaching is one specific research-based coordinated coaching strategy that a program could choose to implement.

Narrator: So what does practice-based coaching look like? The model is a cycle with distinct components, shared goals and action planning, focused observation, and reflection and feedback. Each component is integral to achieving positive outcomes.

Woman: And that seemed to spark a lot of conversation. How did that go?

Narrator: Practice-based coaching can happen face-to-face between a coach and coachee or at a distance, thanks to technology.

Joyce: The Head Start Coaching Companion is a web-based video-sharing and coaching feedback application, and so it's a really great tool for early childhood education staff to use when they're participating in coaching, so it's an opportunity for them to – kind of walk through the practice-based coaching cycle. They can share video, provide feedback, and kind of work on and develop their action plans.

Julie Gretchen: Education professionals are often really strapped for time. We see that as being one of the biggest obstacles for them in even building a coaching relationship is, "When are we going to do that?" Because they're so busy, and this provides them a way when they have 10 minutes sit down and watch a video, or when they have 10 minutes, look at maybe some notes I've made on an observation that they may have uploaded as a video and have that without having to set aside an hour here, an hour there. They can do it really as they have time.

Narrator: Practice-based coaching is a cyclical professional development strategy that can be used on its own or in conjunction with other forms of professional development to support practitioners in a variety of settings with a goal of implementing a defined practice to achieve best outcomes for children.

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