

Fostering Connections

Narrator: Welcome to the short presentation on fostering connections.

[Video starts]

[Children shouting]

[Video ends]

Narrator: Learn about the importance of creating and sustaining positive relationships with the young children in your program and in your care. Fostering Connections is one in a series of presentations on building relationships with children. Let's see what it means to make these connections and establish relationships. We'll think about why these relationships are so important and learn some tips for building lasting relationships with children.

The Framework for Effective Practice describes effective everyday practices that lead to school readiness for all children. There are six parts to the Framework for Effective Practice – a strong equity siding, a foundation of engaging interactions and environments, the supporting pillars of research-based curricula, and effective teaching practices, as well as ongoing assessment – highly individualized teaching practices that ensure every child makes progress toward school readiness, and at the center, parent and family engagement. This presentation focuses on the foundation of the house.

[Video starts]

Teacher: [Speaking Spanish] How do you look when you are happy?

[Video ends]

Narrator: Building positive relationships with children is the first step to creating an engaging learning environment. Building positive relationships, or fostering connections, means that educators, caregivers, and other caring adults get to know each child on a personal level. And they demonstrate those connections in all sorts of ways that show real enjoyment.

[Video starts]

Teacher: [Tapping on floor]

Child: [Tapping on floor]

[Video ends]

Narrator: We see this when educators smile and laugh with infants, toddlers, and preschoolers and when educators and caregivers show genuine enthusiasm for a child's interests, activities, and ideas.

[Video starts]

Teacher: This is fantastic. Who made all this food?

Girl 1: Me!

Girl 2: Me!

Girl 3: Oh, me!

[Video ends]

Narrator: Why are positive relationships so important? The research is clear. Fostering warm and genuine emotional connections with the children in your care can lead to many positive outcomes. Young children who are emotionally connected to others are more likely to show positive development and learning in later years, like curiosity, greater initiative, and positive peer interactions. Young children who have positive relationships to peers and caring adults and opportunities to emotionally connect with others may show fewer negative behaviors such as aggression. And these relationships may buffer or protect young children from the adverse effects of a variety of stressors.

[Video starts]

All: [Singing] All my friends are here with me.

[Video ends]

Narrator: How do educators and caregivers foster connections with the children in their learning environment and in their care? They get to know each child, their likes, their interests, and they learn about their families.

[Video starts]

Child: Miss [inaudible], look!

Teacher: Who is that?

Child: My daddy!

Teacher: That's your daddy?

Child: Yes.

[Video ends]

Narrator: Educators and caregivers show their interest by getting close and playing with children, laughing, or having conversations. They understand it takes time to create connections that matter. Educators and caregivers foster connections throughout the day, day after day. It takes warm smiles and personal greetings.

[Video starts]

Teacher: Good morning, Linda. I missed you yesterday. [Speaking Spanish] I missed you and said, "Oh, my goodness! Where is Linda? Didn't she come?"

[Video ends]

Narrator: It takes time to listen and to honor who each child is. This includes, for example, a child's culture, language, and identity. It takes time to notice and to pay attention to how an infant, toddler, or preschooler is feeling. It takes time to share, to play with the same toys, or have a special moment or conversation. It takes time to encourage, to respect each child's interests and efforts. This short presentation highlighted the importance of fostering connections in the early learning environment, creating and sustaining positive relationships with every infant, toddler, or preschooler sets the stage for better outcomes for school and life, and positive relationships make for a pleasant and productive learning environment for everyone.

Thank you for listening. For more information and more examples, check out the [Fostering Connections – Tips, Tools, and Other Resources](#).