Embedded Learning Opportunities

Head Start Center for Inclusion

Module developed by:
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HSCI Framework

- Focused Instructional Trials
- Embedded Learning Opportunities
- Curriculum Modifications & Adaptations
- High-Quality Early Childhood Program
Today’s Objectives

• Meet Mia and see how her team used embedded learning opportunities to support her learning

• See what embedded learning opportunities might look like in a classroom

• Consider how embedded learning opportunities can be used to take advantage of teachable moments
How do we create Embedded Learning Opportunities?

- Provide targeted instruction or specialized instruction
- Plan for instruction during everyday learning opportunities
- Promote child engagement and learning in everyday activities, routines, and transitions
- Plan for specialized instruction and focus on individualizing your teaching
Key Features of Embedded Learning Opportunities

• Address skills that are important to everyday activities
• Teach skills to a child in activities alongside all children
• Use typically occurring activities and authentic materials
• Use short teaching interactions
Let’s Take a Look
Meet Mia

• Mia is 4 years old and has Down Syndrome

• She attends an integrated Head Start program 5 days a week

• Ms. Mary is worried about Mia’s progress on IEP objectives

• She currently sets aside 10 to 15 minutes each day to work with Mia on IEP objectives and Mia receives 30 minutes of speech language services twice a week down the hall

• Is there a better way to make the most of Mia’s everyday learning opportunities?
Three Steps

1. Planning
2. Implementing
3. Evaluating
Embedded Learning Opportunities

**What** to teach

**When** to teach

**How** to teach
What to Teach
Identifying Learning Objectives
Learning Objectives

• Learning objectives are based on content that children need to learn to participate meaningfully in everyday activities

• Learning objectives include information that will help to design embedded learning opportunities

• Learning objectives focus on what the child needs to learn “right now”

• A learning objective is a behavioral objective that states the behavior or skill the child will learn to do
Identifying Learning Objectives

We identify children’s learning objectives from a variety of sources:

• The child’s IEP
• The child’s ILP
• The classroom curriculum, state standards, or benchmarks
• Family input
• Our own knowledge of child development and learning
• Through observation and assessment
Mia’s IEP Goal

During routine classroom activities, **Mia will use 3-word phrases** to ask for things or to tell people things. Mia will use 3 word phrases 6 times during a language sample collected over 2 data collection days.
Identifying a Learning Objective for Mia

Goal from IEP
Mia will use 3-word phrases

Mia will use 1 to 2 words to express her needs or wants
When to Teach
Activities, Routines, and Transitions
Helping Children Learn in Everyday Activities

Mia’s Daily Schedule

- Arrival
- Free play
- Circle time
- Snack
- Centers
- Toileting

- Lunch
- Nap
- Outdoor play
- Story time
- Music/Art
- Departure
When to Teach

Embedded Learning Opportunities

Learning Target

(Consider child’s abilities, priority skills, preferences, & support needs)

Activity, Routine, or Transition

(Characteristics & “demands”)

High-Quality Teaching & Embedded Instruction
Selecting Times and Activities

An activity matrix helps ensure teaching occurs. It reminds teachers or families about:

• The planned activities and routines
• The priority learning targets for children who need individualized and intentional learning opportunities
• Planned times to embed learning opportunities
Making an Activity Matrix

**Step 1:** List a predictable, balanced classroom schedule of activities – list the activities and times of day in the left-hand column of the chart.

**Step 2:** Create columns to the right for particular children.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Mia</th>
<th>Matthew</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Arrival</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Free Play</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Circle</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Outside</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Snack</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Class Activity</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Departure</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transitions</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## Activity Matrix for Mia

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Mia</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Arrival</strong></td>
<td>Use 1 to 2 words to express her needs or wants</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Free Play</strong></td>
<td>Verbally name at least 3 different colors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Circle</strong></td>
<td>Imitate at least one action performed by a peer</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| **Outside**                    | Use 1 to 2 words to express her needs or wants  
                                 | Imitate at least one action performed by a peer |
| **Snack**                      | Use 1 to 2 words to express her needs or wants |
| **Class Activity**             | Use 1 to 2 words to express her needs or wants |
| **Departure**                  |                                          |
| **Transitions**                | Verbally name at least 3 different colors |
# Class Activity Matrix

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Anna</th>
<th>Kiana</th>
<th>Xander</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Arrival</td>
<td>Remove coat</td>
<td>Respond to Greeting x3</td>
<td>Join in ongoing play</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Free Play</td>
<td>Complete closed ended task x2</td>
<td>Accept and use toy offered by peer x2</td>
<td>Initiate request to Peer x2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Circle</td>
<td>Jump up with 2 feet together x3</td>
<td>Initiate Gross Motor Actions</td>
<td>Answer &quot;where&quot; question</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Outside</td>
<td>2 word phrase with 1 descriptor x2</td>
<td>Follow 1-Step Directions x3</td>
<td>Catch and throw for 3 cycles</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Snack</td>
<td>2 word phrase with 1 descriptor x3</td>
<td>Drink from open cup x4</td>
<td>Respond to peer request x3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Free Play</td>
<td>Complete closed ended task</td>
<td>Use 2 hands together</td>
<td>Initiate Request to Peer x3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
A Well-Planned Activity Matrix

Things to think about:

- Match the child’s learning objective to the activity
- Consider natural locations in which the behavior occurs
- Be aware of staff who are available during daily activities
- Identify the number of opportunities needed for practice
How to Teach

Planned Instructional Sequences
Planned Instructional Sequence (PInS)

• Short teaching interaction used to teach a child a skill
• Use to teach any skill
• Fit into ongoing classroom activities, routines, and transitions
PInS: 4 Step Process

1) Cue
2) Provide help if needed
3) Child response
4) Feedback
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Cue</th>
<th>Child Response</th>
<th>Feedback</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>What will Ms. Mary say or do?</td>
<td>Mia will say “Help.”</td>
<td>Provide Mia with help to open the container and praise for asking.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Provide a container with lid still on

Mia will use 1-2 words to express her needs or wants
PInS for Mia
Three Key Questions for Evaluating Embedded Learning Opportunities

1. Am I doing it?  
   Implementation of embedded learning opportunities

2. Is it working?  
   Monitoring child progress

3. Do I need to make changes?  
   Continue or revise the learning objective and instructional plan
Supporting Mia’s Learning

- Mia’s team decided to use *embedded learning opportunities* to support her learning.

- They began by considering:
  - *What to teach*- learning objectives
  - *When to teach*- ongoing activities, routines, and transitions
  - *How to teach*- intentional and systematic instruction
Mia’s Progress
Embedded Learning Opportunities

• Help meet individualized learning needs by identifying priority learning objectives
• Maximizes children’s motivation by considering interests and preferences
• Provides opportunities to learn and practice important skills in meaningful contexts
• All young children need sufficient learning opportunities

To provide embedded learning opportunities, Mia’s team considered what to teach, when to teach, and how to teach
Embedded Learning Opportunities

- Material in this module adapted from “Impact of Professional Development on Preschool Teachers’ Use of Embedded-Instruction Practices,” a Goal 2 Development and Innovation research project funded by the Institute of Education Sciences and awarded to the University of Florida (R324A070008) (Patricia Snyder, Principal Investigator, Mary Louise Hemmeter, Co-Principal Investigator, Susan Sandall, Co-Principal Investigator, Mary McLean, Co-Principal Investigator, Tara McLaughlin, Research Coordinator, Larry Edelman, Project Consultant)

- Information and opinions expressed in this module are those of the authors, not the Institute of Education Sciences

- Permission to use and adapt these materials has been granted to the Head Start Center for Inclusion

- Thanks to the preschool teachers, children, and families who helped evaluate these materials
More Information

• See the materials that accompany this presentation for further tips, ideas, and checklists that can help guide your practice