

Coaching and Telehealth: Implementing the Recommended Practices (RPs) Successfully

— FOR FAMILIES —

“The DEC Recommended Practices were developed to provide guidance to practitioners and families about the most effective ways to improve the learning outcomes and promote the development of young children, birth through age 5, who have or are at-risk for developmental delays or disabilities. The purpose is to help bridge the gap between research and practice by highlighting those practices that have been shown to result in better outcomes for young children with disabilities, their families, and the personnel who serve them” (DEC, 2014). Each letter and number following the statement under the Recommended Practices column corresponds to the topic and number of the RP. More information can be found at <https://www.dec-sped.org/dec-recommended-practices>.

Recommended Practices	Description
Practitioners build trusting and respectful partnerships with you that are sensitive and responsive to your family’s diverse needs. (F1)	We will ask meaningful questions and actively listen to the needs of your family. We will remain respectful of your time and the impact of stress factors surrounding your family.
Practitioners remain open and honest providing you with the most up-to-date-, comprehensive and unbiased information so you can make informed choices and decisions that best meet the needs of your family. (F2, INS3)	Provide and support you throughout the early intervention process. We will team with you to identify your child’s strengths and areas of growth to help you make the best decisions for your family.
Practitioners will respond to your family’s concerns, priorities, and changing life circumstances throughout the early intervention process (F3)	Routinely check in to determine new concerns and priorities as well as any resources your family may need.
We value the knowledge you have about your child’s interests and abilities. We will continue to build on your knowledge to individualize services to the needs of your child and family. Our goal is to continue to build on your family strengths and jointly solve problems, plan, and implement interventions to promote your child’s participation in activities and routines. (F5, F6, TC2)	Provide direct support within a routine. You can share video observations with us and/or we may directly watch you engage your child in an activity. We will ask you meaningful questions to ensure we are supporting you and your child on current interests and activities. Our goal is to help your child participate in daily routines and activities.
We will work with you to identify and ensure access to any formal and informal resources and supports your child needs to achieve outcomes. (F7)	We acknowledge this may be a stressful time for you and your family. We want to help connect you to any resources and supports you may need including access to basic needs, school, medical care, etc.
Practitioners will respond to your family’s concerns, As you help us identify your child’s strengths, preferences, and interests, we will provide support to you and your child to engage in active learning during that time. The more learning opportunities practiced to support your child in learning a skill, the more neural connections that are made in your child’s developing brain. (INS1, INS5)**	We understand children’s interests and preferences are continuously changing. We will continue to adapt to support your child’s interests by asking you to identify and engage in these activities.
While supporting your child during routines and activities, the practitioner will observe, provide feedback, and model. These coaching strategies will promote your child’s learning and development. (INS7, INS13)	We will support you and your child as you engage in a routine or activity with your child. This will be a combination of observations, reflection, and practice/ feedback. Each session will discuss the strategies and a joint plan on how to easily implement within your daily routines until your next scheduled visit.

***Please refer to the Brain Power of Natural Learning Opportunities handout on the next page to provide an example of the natural learning opportunities caregivers can provide their child each week compared to the limited opportunities with an early intervention practitioner. This document demonstrates how an increase in learning opportunities also strengthens neural connections in a child’s developing brain.*

Brain Power of Natural Learning Opportunities

This document provides an example of the natural learning opportunities caregivers can provide their child each week compared to the limited opportunities with an early intervention practitioner. This document demonstrates how an increase in learning opportunities also strengthens neural connections in a child's developing brain.

During Visit with Early Intervention

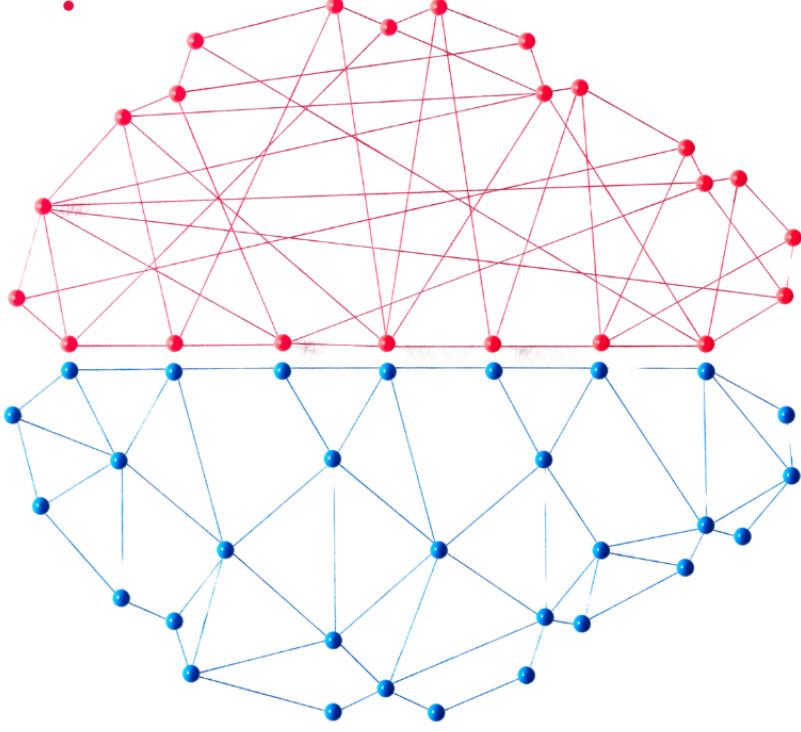
- Modeled signing "more"
 - 5 times during snack time



Neural connections at-risk of breaking away (learning takes longer or skill diminishes)

During Week with Family

- Modeled signing "more"
 - 5 times during snack time twice a day (70)
 - 3 times during play each day (21)
 - Once to splash the water each night for bathtime (7)
 - Once for more tickles before bedtime each night (7)



Neural connections strengthen with increasing opportunities

Total opportunities: 5

Total opportunities: 105



Virginia Department of Behavioral Health & Developmental Services



Infant & Toddler Connection of Virginia



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School of Education
Partnership for People with Disabilities