



Enhancing Services in Natural Environments

Presenter:

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Definitions of Key Terms

Activity Setting

Learning Opportunity

Natural Environment: The Law

Natural Learning Environment

Activity Setting

A situation-specific experience, opportunity, or event that involves a child's interaction with people, the physical environment, or both, and provides a context for a child to learn about his or her own abilities and capabilities, as well as the propensities and proclivities of others.

Learning Opportunities

The contexts in which children can
express competence.

Natural Environments: The Law

- To the maximum extent appropriate to the needs of the child, early intervention services must be provided in natural environments, including the home and community settings in which children without disabilities participate
- Natural environments are settings that are natural or normal for the child's age peers who have no disability

Natural Learning Environments Are:

The places where children experience everyday, typically occurring learning opportunities that promote and enhance behavioral and developmental competencies.

Key Principles and Supporting Research

- The purpose of early intervention
- Working with families
- How children learn
- The role and/or qualities of providers

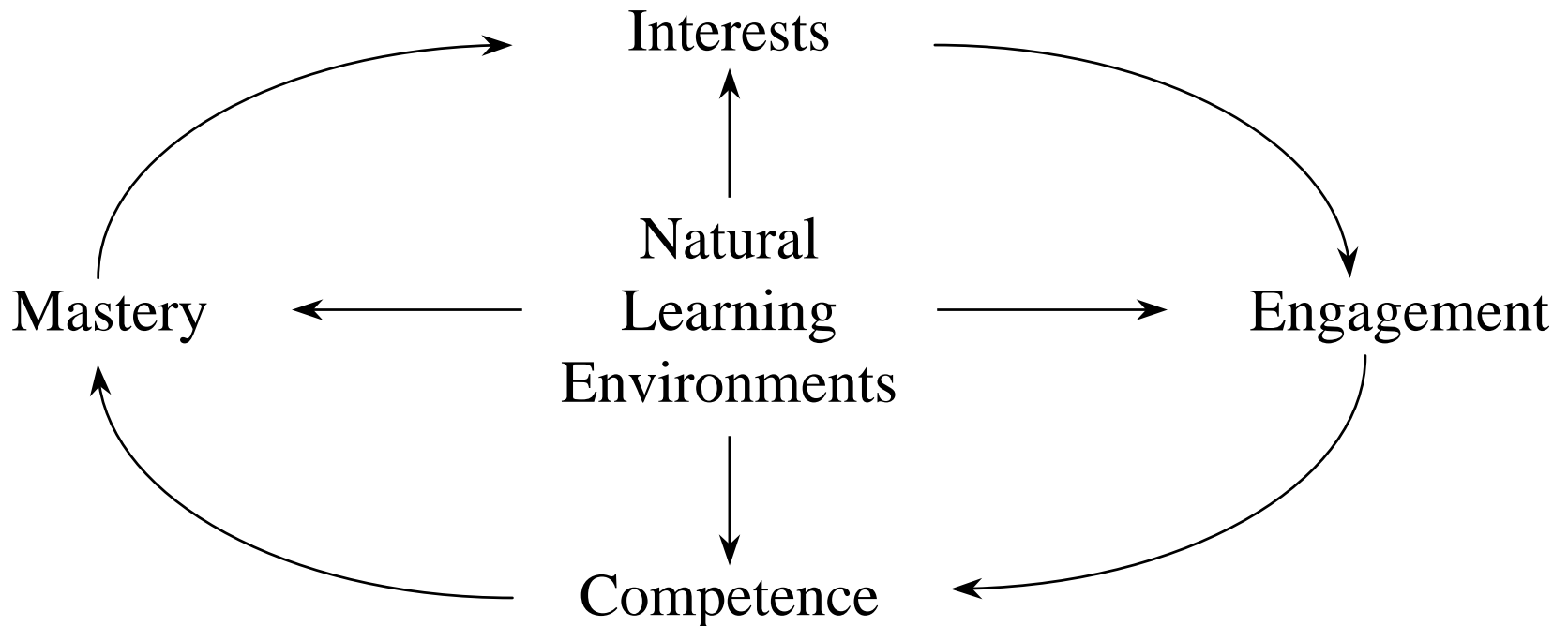
P.L. 99-457: The Law

- To enhance the development of infants and toddlers with disabilities to minimize their potential for developmental delay;
- To reduce the educational costs to our society, including our nation's schools, by minimizing the need for special education and related services after infants and toddlers with disabilities reach school age;
- To minimize the likelihood of institutionalization of individuals with disabilities and maximize the potential for their independent living in society;
- To enhance the capacity of families to meet the special needs of their infants and toddlers with disabilities; and
- To enhance the capacity of state and local agencies and service providers to identify, evaluate, and meet the needs of historically underrepresented populations, particularly minority, low-income, inner-city, and rural populations. (see 20 U.S.C. § 1471 (a))

Family-Centered

Care that recognizes and respects the pivotal role of the family in the lives of children. It supports families in their natural care-giving roles, promotes normal patterns of living, and ensures family collaboration and choice in the provision of services to the child.

Creating Learning Opportunities



Situated Learning

- Is embedded in everyday natural environments
- Emphasizes the acquisition of functional competence
- Makes possible increased child participation in those environments
- Is both social and nonsocial

Intervention Strategies

- Instructional Practices
 - Contingent Responsiveness
 - Response Contingent Learning
 - Incidental Teaching
 - Responsive Teaching

General Role of Service Providers: The Law

- Consulting with parents, other service providers, and representatives of appropriate community agencies to ensure the effective provision of services in that area;
- Training parents and others regarding the provision of those services; and,
- Participating in the multidisciplinary team's assessment of a child and the child's family, and in the development of integrated goals and outcomes for the individualized family service plan.

Consider Key Practices in the IFSP Process

- Gathering information from families
- Evaluation & assessment
- IFSP development
- On-going implementation in natural environments
- Special considerations for working with various cultures and language backgrounds

IFSP Model

- Family centered practices of listening and being responsive
- Team collaboration supporting a primary provider
- IFSP derived from, and using child participation in family identified activity settings as the context for learning

The IFSP Process

- Identifying the family's concerns, priorities and resources: beginning a partnership
- Identifying the family's activity settings: the value of home and community
- Identifying the child's developmental strengths and needs in the context of the family's activity settings: functional assessment strategies
- Identifying collaborative outcomes:
 - To enhance family capacity
 - To enhance child competence
 - To expand activity settings

The IFSP Process (cont.)

- Promoting participation in activity settings:
 - adaptations
 - supports
 - intervention strategies
- Assigning responsibilities across team members:
 - collaborative consultation and primary provider
 - building community capacity
- Evaluating progress:
 - the child
 - the family
 - the community

Activity Setting Recording Form

Interventionist: _____	Dates: _____
Parent's Name: _____	Child's Name: _____

E X I S T I N G A C T I V I T Y S E T T I N G S	N E W A C T I V I T Y S E T T I N G S

Activity Setting Intervention

Parent's Name: _____

Child's Name: _____

Interventionist: _____

Date: _____

Location	Activity Setting	How Often	Learning Opportunity	Why Important

Training, Technical Assistance and Materials

- Target audience
- T&TA format/process, including time commitments
- Key topics/ content
- Available materials- especially materials describing the family's role
- Follow up
- Costs

Top Nine Must Reads!

1. Bruder, M. B. (1997). The effectiveness of specific educational/developmental curricula for children with established disabilities. In M. J. Guralnick (Ed.), The effectiveness of early intervention: Directions for second generation research (pp. 523-548). Baltimore, MD: Paul H. Brookes Publishing Co.
2. Bruder, M. B. (2001). Infants and toddlers: Outcomes and ecology. In M. J. Guralnick (Ed.), Early childhood inclusion: Focus on change . Baltimore, MD: Paul H. Brookes Publishing Co.
3. Dunst, C. J. (2001). Participation of young children with disabilities in community learning activities. In M. J. Guralnick (Ed.), Early childhood inclusion: Focus on change (pp. 307-333). Baltimore, MD: Paul H. Brookes Publishing Co.
4. Dunst, C. J., Bruder, M. B., Trivette, C., Hamby, D., & Raab, M. (2001). Characteristics and consequences of everyday natural learning opportunities. Topics in Early Childhood Special Education, 21(2).

Top Nine Must Reads! (cont.)

5. Dunst, C. J., Hamby, D., Trivette, C. M., Raab, M., & Bruder, M. D. (2000). Everyday family and community life and children's naturally occurring learning opportunities. Journal of Early Intervention, 23(3), 151-164.
6. Dunst, C. J. (2000). Revisiting "Rethinking early intervention". Topics in Early Childhood Special Education, 20, 95-104.
7. Bruder, M. B. (2000). Family centered early intervention: Clarifying our values for the new millennium. Topics in Early Childhood Special Education, 20(2), 105-115.
8. Bruder, M. B., & Staff, I. (1998). A comparison of the effects of type of classroom and service characteristics on toddlers with disabilities. Topics in Early Childhood Special Education, 18(1), 26-37.
9. Bruder, M. B., Staff, I., & McMurrer-Kaminer, E. (1997). Toddlers receiving early intervention in childcare centers: A description of a service delivery system. Topics in Early Childhood Special Education, 17(2), 185-208.