



Natural Learning Environment

Practices: Everyday Activities

Typical everyday family and/or classroom activities provide the best opportunities for child learning and development because they are:

Frequent – Activities such as eating, dressing, diaper changes or toileting, washing hands, and picking-up happen often throughout the day. This repetition provides many opportunities for the child to learn new skills and practice existing ones while they and their caregivers are doing the things they want and need to do.

Sustainable – When the important adults in children’s lives know how to promote child participation in everyday activities, learning and development can happen almost all the time, not just when the early intervention practitioner is present.

Natural – Real life activities require new skills to be learned in the context in which they can and will be used, like asking for a favorite treat at snack time (communication), picking up a piece of cereal to eat or crawling over to the table to get some juice (fine & gross motor), figuring out that turning the faucet makes more water at bath time (cognition), sharing toys while playing with a new friend (social-emotional), and putting on your shoes so you can go to the store with dad (adaptive).

Easy to Remember – Caregivers may forget or not have time to do exercises, homework, or other tasks perceived as something extra to do, but they always remember or are naturally reminded to engage in activities related to feeding, dressing, cleaning, and protecting the young children in their lives.

Promoting child participation in everyday activities with the important people in their lives is the most effective early intervention.