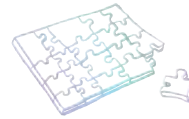


Research tells us that a responsive caregiver interaction style favorably influences a young child's development.

Parents, caregivers, and early childhood educators can strengthen a child's developing mind, social skills, and emotions when they are aware of the child's efforts to interact and consistently respond to the child in ways that are sensitive, prompt, and appropriate.

The early childhood practice described in this brochure is based on findings presented in a practice-based research synthesis conducted at the Research and Training Center on Early Childhood Development by C. M. Trivette (2003). Influence of caregiver responsiveness on the development of young children with or at risk for developmental disabilities. *Bridges*, 1(6). To read or download the complete research synthesis and/or a user-friendly, illustrated summary, *Bottomlines* 1(6), visit www.researchtopractice.info. Printed copies are available from Winterberry Press (www.wbpress.com). All opinions expressed are those of the Research and Training Center on Early Childhood Development and do not necessarily reflect the views of the U. S. Department of Education, Office of Special Education Programs, Research to Practice Division, funder of the work of the RTC (H324K010005).



Evidence-Based Practice Guides

Additional practice guides are available from the RTC for this and other important early childhood topics.

Related materials also are available as part of *Solutions* evidence-based tool kits.

Please see descriptions of these resources and information for ordering under "Products" at

www.researchtopractice.info

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Cornerpiece

Tune In & Respond!

Caregiver interactions with a young child are most beneficial when they are SENSITIVE, PROMPT, and APPROPRIATE.

An Evidence-Based Early Childhood Intervention Practice

TUNE IN

and respond
to a young child's efforts
to interact with people and objects

What is the practice?

Tune in and respond to a young child's efforts to interact with people or objects in ways that are

- **sensitive**
- **prompt**, and
- **appropriate**

Mom watches intently for cues that help her respond to the vocalizations of her young daughter



Parents find that active playtimes, like a day spent at the beach, offer excellent opportunities for responsive interactions with their young children.



How do we do it?

Let a child know that you welcome the chance to interact with him by responding in a way that is appealing to the child. The following three characteristics are part of an interactive style that encourages child learning and development:

- 1 Pay attention to the many different ways a child tries to interact with people and objects in his environment. Notice glances, special expressions, gestures, vocalizations, and other signs of communication he might use in addition to or in place of words. **Be sensitive to signs that a child has something to say.**
- 2 Respond quickly to let a child know his attempt to interact was a success. **Be prompt in how you respond to a child.**
- 3 Let the intensity of your response match that of the child in terms of things like loudness or quietness and the level of expressiveness or emotion in your voice. This makes the interaction more comfortable for the child. **Be appropriate, matching your response to the child's style.**



"Tuned in" to her daughter's delight with an image in the family photo album, this mom appropriately mirrors her child's high level of enthusiasm as they talk about the picture.



Mom's warm, smiling response delights her baby.

Take a look!

This mother smiles and blows on her daughter's tiny fingers each time the baby reaches toward her face. The simple game charms the baby and is an example of positive responsiveness that is sensitive, prompt, and appropriate. Opportunities for this kind of playful interaction occur naturally throughout the day.

Is it working?

Does the child express enjoyment and contentment with your response?

Does the child repeat her behavior?

Does the child attempt to continue interacting with you or with objects?