

STRATEGIES THAT FACILITATE COMMUNICATION IN INCLUSIVE EARLY CHILDHOOD PROGRAMS

ANSWER CHILDREN'S QUESTIONS

- Answer honestly and straightforwardly
- Contribute to understanding about the child with a disability
- Answer in a manner a young child would understand
- Convey respect for the child with a disability

INVITE AND ENCOURAGE PARTICIPATION

- Use warm and accepting manner
- Encourage frequent brief interactions when initially introducing a child
- Invite another child to become involved in an ongoing activity
- Suggest child select new activity to include a child with a disability
- Prompt meaningful participation in a natural manner

ADD MEANINGFUL CONTENT ON BEHALF OF THE CHILD

- Address ongoing conversation or activity
- Emphasize the similarities among the children
- Relate information as well as experiences, thoughts, and feelings of the child

TEACH CHILDREN TO INTERACT DIRECTLY WITH THEIR CLASSMATE WITH A DISABILITY

- Teach children to recognize and interpret the nonverbal response of their classmate
- Teach children to direct their comments and questions directly to their classmate

ALLOW SPONTANEOUS INTERACTIONS AMONG THE CHILDREN TO OCCUR

- Provide assistance without directly participating in the children's interactions
- Step back and fade physically from the children's interactions

Adapted from: Thompson, B., Wickham, D., Wegner, J., Mulligan-Ault, M., Shanks, P., & Reinertson, B. (1993). Handbook for the inclusion of children with severe disabilities. Lawrence, KS: Lerner Managed Designs Inc.