

Opening routine

- Greet the family warmly.
- Set up for video recording, if needed.
- Check-in about any updates, routines, or goals previously set.
- Explain the purpose of the book or toy and introduce relevant child development concepts.
- Begin with the opening ritual, if applicable (e.g., a song or culturally relevant routine).
- If the ELS is modeling any techniques, demonstrate and discuss the approach being used with the family.

During visit

Body Positioning:

The Early Learning Specialist (ELS) should encourage physical closeness between parent and child by starting the visit by sitting beside the caregiver.

Invite and allow:

Follow the lead of the caregiver and child. A simple way to do this is to hand the book or toy to the parent.

Use coaching + facilitation principles:

- **Observe** the parent-child interaction without interrupting positive moments or flows. (Try for 3 mins at a time.)
- **Comment** on positive interactions and share successes observed.
- **Connect** the caregiver's actions to child development principles.
- **Ask:** prompt questions that encourage reflection, using open-ended formats.

Closing routine

- Complete any closing rituals (e.g., a routine signifying the end of the visit).
- Reflect on the visit by asking open-ended questions: What did the family observe? What strengths did they identify? (Your site's questions should be in the Reflection Record)
- Set or reaffirm family goals: How can the ELS provide support to the caregivers?
- Engage in co-planning: Does the family have ideas for the next visit?

Observation prompts:

- "I'm going to observe you both play together for a few minutes."
- If you want to practice _____ with your child, I can watch you.
- "How do you think she wants to play with it?"
Let's watch her.
- "I'll watch for a bit to see what he is learning."
- "What do you think she is learning?"

Open-ended questions:

- "What happened when...?"
- "What have you tried?"
- "What do you think about...?"
- "What would happen if...?"
- "What might you try next time?"
- "How did that compare with...?"
- "How do you feel about...?"
- "How would it work if you tried...?"
- "Where could you find out more?"
- "Would you like a suggestion?"
- "Can I offer you any resources on...?"

Starter phrases for a strength-based approach:

- "I noticed you..."
- "I observed you did _____. This is important because..."
- "I noticed when you did _____, your child responded by...."
- "I saw when you did _____, it supported your child's development because...."
- "This behavior (or skill) from your child matters because...."
- "It was interesting to see..."
- "How did you know to do that?"
- "Tell me what you were thinking when..."

Being with families: **praise** vs. **specific encouragement**

- **Praise:** "Good job, Mom!" **Try instead**
- **Encouragement:** "I see you've been working on that."

- **Praise:** "I liked how you _____." **Try instead**
- **Encouragement:** "Look at how reacted to you when you did _____. Tell me about it."

This approach focuses more on recognizing the effort, which can engage the caregiver in conversation and encourage further expression.