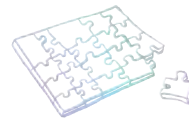


Highly focused methods using video tapes for modeling and providing feedback about sensitive parenting skills are very effective ways to help parents learn to interact with their young children in ways that support child development and healthy parent-child bonding.

The early childhood practice described in this brochure is based on findings from a practice-based research synthesis conducted at the Research and Training on Early Childhood Development by C. J. Dunst and D.Z. Kassow (2004). Characteristics of interventions promoting parental sensitivity to child behavior. *Bridges*, 2(5). Visit www.researchtopractice.info to read or download the complete research synthesis, or order copies from Winterberry Press at the mailing address printed below or online at www.wbpress.com. All opinions expressed in the research synthesis, this practice guide, and related materials 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

Research and Training Center on Early Childhood Development
Center for Evidence-Based Practices

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Cornerpiece

Learning Parental Sensitivity

**An
Evidence-Based
Early Childhood
Practice**

Parental Sensitivity

You can learn it!

What is the practice?

Moms and dads can learn to be sensitive to their young children's behaviors in ways that strengthen their parent-child bond and benefit the child's development.

Research findings show that parent educators and early interventionists can support this important learning by:

1. Using video tapes and model parents to demonstrate sensitive parenting behaviors including (a) being aware of and paying attention to their child's behavior, (b) correctly understanding their child's efforts

to interact, and (c) responding quickly and lovingly to their child's behavior; and

2. Enabling parents to view and discuss videos of themselves interacting with their young children.



How do we do it?

Select scenes from movies and television programs that show parents or other adults interacting sensitively with young children. Tape the scenes and then view and discuss them with a group of parents.

Participate in Mommy & Me play groups, Kindermusik lessons, and other types of parent-child activities that provide many chances to observe peer parents engaging in successful, sensitive interactions with their young children.

Arrange to videotape yourself spending time caring for your child. Later, review the tape and count the times you were attentivene, understanding, and responsive. Note the places where you were not sensitive to your child's attempts to interact and communicate.

Take a look!

Being sensitive in ways that benefit your baby can become a very natural part of your parenting style. Start simply by taking time to **watch** your little one. She uses her voice, she moves her arms, legs, and head, and she uses her face very expressively. Take time **to figure out** what she's saying with these behaviors. Learn from more-experienced parents what baby's little signals might mean and what you can do to show her you understand and will always try to meet her needs. Relax! You'll soon be confident in your ability to figure out how **to respond** in ways that will make your baby happy.



Is it working?

After participating in interventions designed to help them learn how to interact sensitively with their young children, parents will

- **pay attention,**
- **understand,** and
- **respond positively**

to their child's attempts to communicate and interact.