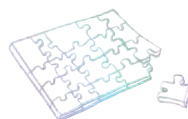


Learning opportunities that engage a child's special interests are most likely to affect his/her development and learning in positive ways

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: Raab, M., & Dunst, C. J. (2006). Influence of child interests on variations in child behavior and functioning. *Bridges*, 4(2). 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

Very Interesting!

Engage your child's special interests to strengthen learning and functioning.

An Evidence-Based Early Childhood Practice

Very Interesting!

Learning opportunities that engage a child's special interests are most likely to affect his/her development and learning in positive ways



What is the practice?

Involve young children in activities that they like to do and that they find interesting. Research shows that children who enjoy and are interested in the learning opportunities provided to them are most likely to experience benefits such as positive development and functioning.



How do we do it?

Match a child's interests with everyday activities to increase powerful learning opportunities:

Identify your child's interests by observing what he/she likes to do, what he/she chooses to do most often, and what gets and keeps his/her attention.

Identify everyday activities you do in your family and in your community that give your child chances to do the things he/she likes to do.

Increase your child's interest-based learning opportunities by giving him/her chances to participate in the everyday activities that match his/her interests.

Incorporate aspects of your child's interests in his/her everyday experiences.

Take a look!

Find ways for your child to engage in everyday activities that involve his/her special interests. If he's wild about water, for example, let him play along in the sink as you wash dishes, use a hose to water flowerbeds and gardens, splash waterproof toys in the bathtub, use a soaking sponge and squeegee to clean patio or storm doors, launder doll clothes in a bowl of soapy water, stomp through puddles on a neighborhood walk, swish a stick in a pond or stream, and much more! If she loves the supermarket, let her help select the family's fruits and vegetables, weigh produce, push items across the scanner at the checkout station, find familiar letters on package labels, and much more! Interests + activities = FUN!

Is it working?

Does your child enjoy the activities?

Does your child stay involved and busy in the activities?

Does your child try doing new and different things in the activities?

Does your child show more positive and less negative behavior in the activities?