

# 'Strategies to support communication' planning and reflection checklist

Supporting resource for Webinar 3: Early childhood inclusion step 2- Strategies to support inclusion



## The purpose of this checklist

This checklist is a summary of evidence-based strategies from Webinar 3 that can be used to support the communication skills of children with disability or developmental delays in all ECEC settings. You can use it as a reminder of the strategies, to plan when to use them, and to reflect after using them.

## How to use this checklist

Think about how you can use one or more of these strategies in your daily work with children – write this in the 'plan' column.

After you have implemented the strategy, write your reflections in the 'reflection' column: How did it go? What would you do differently next time? Could you use this strategy with a different child or group of children?

| Strategy   | Plan- when will you use it? | Reflection- how did it go? |
|--|-----------------------------|----------------------------|
| <b>General strategies to support communication:</b>  |                             |                            |
| <b>Interpret behaviour, gestures and facial expressions.</b><br>Children communicate in many non-verbal ways. Educators can translate behaviours to give children the words they need to say (e.g., "Tamara, you can say – 'My turn please'", "Yes, it's exciting Eddie!", "I see you want to go outside".). |                             |                            |

| Strategy   | Plan- when will you use it? | Reflection- how did it go? |
|--|-----------------------------|----------------------------|
| <p><b>Use Key Word Sign (KWS) and gestures.</b></p> <p>KWS is the use of Auslan signs along with spoken words. The 'key' words within a sentence are signed.</p> <p>Learn more and download supporting resources at: <a href="http://kwsa.org.au">kwsa.org.au</a></p>            |                             |                            |
| <p><b>Use visuals.</b></p> <p>A range of visual supports or 'visuals' can be used to support both receptive communication (understanding) and expressive communication.</p> <p>See the 'Tips for using visual supports' resource for more information.</p>                       |                             |                            |
| <p><b>To support expressive communication:</b></p>   |                             |                            |
| <p><b>Provide opportunities for shared dialogue.</b></p> <p>Educators provide opportunities for language dialogue (conversational turn taking) by responding to the child's discoveries, interests and questions while actively engaging in regular routines and activities.</p> |                             |                            |

| Strategy  | Plan- when will you use it? | Reflection- how did it go? |
|---|-----------------------------|----------------------------|
| <p><b>Provide choices.</b></p> <p>Educators look for opportunities to offer choices in any situation throughout a day. Once a choice is offered to a child, the educator should then wait for them to respond. This increases communication and language practice within everyday activities.</p>   |                             |                            |
| <p><b>Ask yes/no questions.</b></p> <p>When the goal is for the child to communicate, educators can ask questions that need a reply from the child – for example, ‘Do you want a sausage?’</p> <p>If the child indicates ‘yes,’ they can teach the child to nod their head in reply by modelling this for the child.</p>  |                             |                            |
| <p><b>Set up situations that encourage communication.</b></p> <p>‘Sabotage’ is the name of a technique where you deliberately set up a situation in which the child will need to comment or ask you for something. For example, the educator may set a table up with paper and a paint pot but no paintbrush, or they might put their own jacket on backwards and wait for the child to comment. The goal should be to create an ‘oops!’ moment that leads to spontaneous communication, not to cause the child major frustration or anxiety.</p> |                             |                            |

| Strategy  | Plan- when will you use it? | Reflection- how did it go? |
|---|-----------------------------|----------------------------|
| <p><b>Expand utterances.</b></p> <p>Educators respond to a child’s utterances (sounds, words, or phrases) by restating them and adding 1 or 2 extra words.</p> <p>For example, if a child says “car”, the educator could respond by saying “A blue car!”</p>  |                             |                            |
| <p><b>Correct/recast incorrect utterances.</b></p> <p>Educators can correct any incorrect utterances (e.g., articulation or grammatical errors) by repeating the utterance, word or phrase back to the child correctly, or ‘recasting’ it.</p> <p>For example, if a child states “her’s jumping” the educator could reply “that’s right, <b>she is</b> jumping” or if a child pointed and said “tat” the educator could reply “oh, a <b>cat</b>”.</p> |                             |                            |

| Strategy  | Plan- when will you use it? | Reflection- how did it go? |
|---|-----------------------------|----------------------------|
| <b>To support receptive communication:</b>  |                             |                            |
| <p><b>Identify and remove potential distractions.</b></p> <p>Early childhood education and care environments can be busy and noisy places!</p> <p>Educators should be aware of potential distractions within the learning environment and minimise or remove these where possible.</p>                                    |                             |                            |
| <p><b>Use clear and concise language.</b></p> <p>Educators avoid using very long sentences, lots of 'jargon', or words that are complex. They use 'everyday language' and keep statements simple and clear.</p>   |                             |                            |
| <p><b>Break down directions into steps.</b></p> <p>In addition to using clear and concise language, when giving directions educators break these down into steps.</p> <p>For example, <i>"First get your hat, then go outside"</i>, or <i>"1. Go to your bag, 2. get your water bottle, and 3. sit at the table"</i>.</p> |                             |                            |

| Strategy   | Plan- when will you use it? | Reflection- how did it go? |
|--|-----------------------------|----------------------------|
| <p><b>Phrase directions positively.</b></p> <p>Educators say what they would like the child <b>to do</b>, not what they want the child not to do or to stop doing.</p> <p>For example, they say “walk inside” not “stop running”.</p>  |                             |                            |
| <p><b>Pause to provide processing time.</b></p> <p>Young children with disability or developmental delays may need extra ‘processing time’ when they are spoken to. Educators pause and wait expectantly after making a statement or asking a question to give the child time to respond. This allows the child time to comprehend what the educator said, think about a response, then respond.</p> |                             |                            |