

Everyday Child-and-Family Activities

The ways in which a child learns to do things in different everyday activities are amazing to watch. Young children, with help from their parents, learn to “figure out” dressing and undressing, eating with a spoon, drinking from a cup, using words to talk with others, and much, much more. Parents are an important source of information on children’s everyday, real-life behavior and skills. This information is especially important for encouraging young children’s everyday learning.

[Watch a video of this guide](#)

Everyday Learning

- Your child’s participation in early childhood intervention will involve lots of interactions with professionals specially trained to work with young children. The more they know about your child’s behavior and learning, the more helpful they can be.
- Start by making a list of the activities that “make up” your child’s and family’s everyday experiences. These include things that happen every day (e.g., meal times) or most days (e.g., bath time) and things that occur less often (e.g., trips to the park).
- Next to each activity list the things your child does when involved in the activities. This includes the behavior your child uses to interact with people and objects, things that interest your child, and things that keep your child involved in the activities.
- Pay special attention to the ways your child tries to “make things happen,” “gets you to interact or play with her,” and “figure things out.” This can be especially helpful for deciding what kinds of activities will help your child learn new behavior.
- Share the information you have gathered on your child with professionals who work with your family. This will help make sure their suggestions and ideas fit into your child’s and family’s lifestyle.



A Quick Peek

Johnny, a young child with a physical disability, is scheduled for an evaluation to update his intervention plan. The early childhood specialist working with Johnny and his family prepare for the evaluation by asking Johnny’s parents to make a list of the activities that make up his everyday life, the things Johnny does while involved in the activities, and the new things he is beginning to do while interacting with other people, toys, and objects in the activities. Johnny’s parents make special note of the activities that keep their son engrossed in play and interaction and the activities he especially likes to do. The early childhood specialist and Johnny’s parents use the information to decide which activities and which behavior in the activities will be used to set goals and priorities for the next four to six months of intervention.

You’ll know the practice is working when...

- The assessment identifies child strengths (behavior and interests)
- Real-life skills are identified for the child to learn
- Everyday activities are used for encouraging real-life skills

This practice guide is based upon the following *DEC Recommended Practices*: Assessment 2, 4, 6, 7, 9
 The DEC Recommended Practices are available at <http://dec-sped.org/recommendedpractices>

Access this practice guide and other products at <http://ectacenter.org/decrp>
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