# Support for Communication

## Key Points: Support for Communication

- Adults are responsive to child-initiated communication
- Adults use scaffolding strategies to encourage and facilitate social communication
- Adults use alternative means of communication to facilitate communication
- Adults use intentional strategies to encourage and facilitate oral language development
- Adults use visual supports, books, and classroom resources to support social communication
- Adults support reciprocal communication

## Best Practices

All adults in the classroom actively promote social communication with children using a variety of scaffolding strategies including alternative means of communication (e.g., assistive communication devices, sign language, pictures, etc.). Adults intentionally use alternative means of communication to enable children to communicate and participate fully within classroom activities with peers. Adults intentionally plan for the use of communication supports in order to allow children to participate in all aspects of the day (e.g., during routines, playtime, large and small group activities, etc.). These communication systems and supports can be both high and low tech, but they are embedded throughout a child's day and accessed as needed.

## Looking For…

- Adults who adjust their communication strategies to meet the needs of individual children
- Specific communication strategies that are embedded throughout the day to promote children's oral language skills
- Adults use communication strategies that actively encourage and facilitate social communication with and among children
- Adults use materials that support social communication (e.g., social stories, visuals of social communication behaviors) when needed.
- Communication strategies are used on a regular basis and tailored to the individual needs of the child.

- o Repetition
- o Response Prompting
- o Modeling
- o Descriptive Commenting
- o Expanding
- o Asking open-ended questions
- The availability and use of alternative communication systems (e.g., pictures, symbols, gestures, sign language, assistive communication devices

## Guiding Questions for Coaching

- Do you intentionally use strategies to support communication in your classroom?
- How do you choose which strategy would best meet the individual needs of a child?
- What is social communication and how can you support the development of those skills within your children?
- What are some specific examples or ways you have supported the development of a child's social communication skills?

## Self-Check for Teachers

- ✓ Do I intentionally use instructional strategies throughout the day to support communication? If yes, how?
- ✓ Do I adjust my communication to meet the individual developmental levels of children?
- ✓ If a child requires assistive technology to support their communication, am I comfortable using it and do I know where to get support?
- ✓ Do I arrange the environment, provide activities and implement strategies to promote and support social communication?
- ✓ Do I respond and extend children's communication by asking questions and making comments?

This document was adapted from:

AoEInclusion (n.d.). *Illinois LiveBinder ICP Resources by Item*. (http://www.livebinders.com/play/play?id=2261762)

ICP content reference:

Soukakou, E. P. (2016). *The Inclusive Classroom Profile (ICP) Manual*. Brookes Publishing.

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