



Connecting with Families

With children learning at home, our connections with families are so important. These tips will help you be focused and responsive during those calls or virtual meetings.

Opening	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ “How is everyone?” “How are you?” ▶ Validate challenges “Sounds like it’s been an exhausting week.” ▶ Invite the family to share one high point and one low point since the last conversation.
Check in	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Ask about child and family progress since your last conversation. ▶ Celebrate child progress. ▶ Identify if there are new concerns to discuss.
Make a plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Share information and strategies related to learning at home. ▶ Ask family for ideas for embedding instruction in their routines. ▶ Identify a plan for next steps that includes family ideas and suggestions.
Problem solve	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Respond to any new concerns or questions. ▶ Provide suggestions or trouble-shooting.
Review	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Review and summarize ideas or activities for implementation. ▶ Confirm time for next conversation. ▶ Offer to share notes or a text to summarize the conversation.

Tips for your conversation:

- ▶ Anticipate needs and have resources available to share with families (e.g., community agency phone numbers or web sites).
- ▶ Map out what you want to share using this guide before you make the call.
- ▶ Help families identify their strengths and provide affirmation.
- ▶ You don’t have to be the expert or solve all the problems.
 - *That is a good question. Let me see if I can find out for you.*
- ▶ Use active listening phrases:
 - *So you feel...*
 - *It sounds like you...*
 - *What I’m hearing is...*
 - *I wonder if...*
- ▶ Ask open-ended questions:
 - *How might you do that?*
 - *What times of the day might work better?*
 - *What is most important to you right now?*
- ▶ Validate families’ emotions and thoughts.