

# Setting the Stage



During *Setting the Stage*, the caregiver shares information about what happened since the last visit, such as general updates on the child's health or doctor's appointments, accomplishments, or recent challenges with the embedded learning opportunities (an embedded learning opportunity is a chance for a child to practice skills that help them reach specific goals, presented in the context of a routine or activity). This is a comfortable, conversational exchange. The EI listens respectfully and encourages caregiver reflection that builds on the information shared and supports the parent-child relationship. The EI may share resources the parents requested, describe developmental information, or address any other priorities identified by the family.

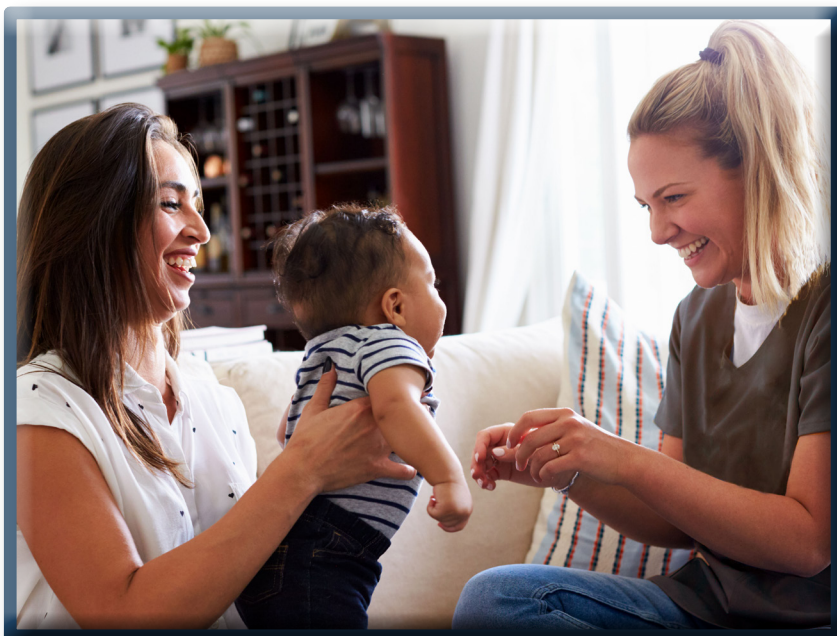
*Setting the Stage* generally occurs at the beginning of a visit, encouraging the caregiver and EI to collaborate on family priorities, exchange information, and to make plans for what will occur during the session. The EI supports the caregiver's role as the decision-maker early in the visit to encourage ongoing, active participation and decision-making throughout the visit. The EI and caregiver exchange information that strengthens the caregivers' knowledge and skills to support their child's learning and builds their confidence and competence.

The EI listens to the family's ideas or questions, connects them to the IFSP priorities to increase caregiver knowledge and understanding, and adapts to changes in priorities requested by the family. Discussions also focus on identifying the intervention priorities and strategies for the visit; for example, the parents and the EI use the Family 5Q to decide who will do what in a routine, how to organize the environment, or how, when, and where teaching strategies will be used.

## Practices and Principles

## How to...

Listen and learn from the family while gathering general and specific family updates.	Ask about the family ideas, concerns, and reflections during a comfortable, conversational exchange of greetings, updates, and session planning.
Focus on the family's priorities while discussion connections and sharing information.	Focus on the family's priorities while discussion connections and sharing information.
Promote the caregiver's participation and decision making while deciding on a plan for the session.	Use caregiver reflections and comments to build a plan for the session with explicit identification of the Family 5Q.



The principles and practices for *Setting the Stage* are woven into the EIs' interactions and conversations with the caregivers that provide opportunities and supports for them to gain confidence and competence in their ability to promote their child's learning. The conversations and information exchanges that occur when setting the stage reflect the uniqueness of the family and are responsive to their priorities and preferences.

Reflection and problem solving are used to build on child and family strengths and interests, what they do, and how they do it. The EI listens to the caregiver's updates and reflections and encourages the caregiver to share ideas, ask questions, and describe what worked and didn't from their perspective. The EI helps the caregiver recognize the importance of the caregiver-child interactions by using their examples to deepen their understanding of how they are teaching their child.

Setting the Stage is an essential component for building relationships and maintaining positive and effective communication. EIs gain an understanding of the family's concerns and challenges as well as their expectations and dreams for their family. Information exchanged is used by the caregivers as they develop and implement their Family 5Q Action Plan. Each of the Qs are discussed and updated during Setting the Stage.

## Remember

An important point to remember about *Setting the Stage* is that the more opportunities parents have to share ideas and make decisions during the home visit with support from the EI, the more confident and competent they become to implement intervention throughout their day. Begin their participation in *Setting the Stage*! Beginning the visit with the caregiver's active participation provides opportunities for them to build on what they know and can do. They gain confidence sharing what worked during updates and through comments shared by the EI about how they are promoting their child's learning. The partnership builds trust and secures the caregiver's ownership of the intervention plan.