



# 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.

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

## 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.