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# Learning Guide 1.11 Interaction-

# Practice Profile

**Interactional practices** involve observing, interpreting, and responding contingently. Sensitive and responsive interactions are foundational to the language, cognitive, and social-emotional development of a child.

## **How to Use**

Module 1 Interactions Practice Profile connects DEC Recommended Practices for Interaction with how this practice contributes to child outcomes and describes example behavior of practitioners that are associated with each practice. Practitioners who exemplify practices within the expected/proficient range are able to generalize skills to a wide range of settings and contexts. Practitioners who exemplify practices within the developmental range are ready for increased coaching. The developmental range is included as a way to help practitioners identify practices that are approaching proficient but are missing essential components that contribute to child outcomes. Practitioners who exemplify practices within the unacceptable range may require more assistance in the large-scale implementation infrastructure. This can include more focused professional development and intensive coaching as well as issues at the administrative level (hiring and credentials requirements) (Metz, Bartley, Blase, & Fixen, 2011).

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| Core Component | Contribution to the Outcome | Expected/Proficient\* | Developmental | Unacceptable |
| **INT1. Practitioners promote the child’s social-emotional development by observing, interpreting, and responding contingently to the range of the child’s emotional expressions.** | The practitioner observes the child then acts in a way that is contingently matched to the child’s focus so the child connects the response to his intentions and feelings. | *A home visitor comments to the parent what a great helper the child is, as she helps gather up the toys they have been using.* | *A home visitor says thank you to the child when he joins her in gathering up the toys they have been using.* | *A home visitor continues to try to interest the child in a puppet she is holding even though he starts crying and pushes it away.* |
| *The early interventionist watches the child’s face as he talks to the stuffed animal he is holding and patting, then comments that the animal is so soft, and feels so good to pet.* | *An early interventionist smiles when the child holds up a stuffed animal to show her, but continues to use the play-doh to follow her lesson plan, which works toward a specific goal.* | *An early interventionist coaches parents in ways to reduce clinginess in their toddler by outlining a strict bedtime routine for them to follow.* |
| *An early childhood teacher shows genuine pleasure in each child’s excitement about his accomplishments.* | *When a child brings a puzzle over to where the early childhood teacher is sitting, she pulls out a chair for the child to sit on, and then moves to another area.* | *An early childhood teacher tells a child who is frustrated with a game to go “calm down” and come back when he is ready.* |
| *A physical therapist holds a child’s hips so he can play at the table and comments, “I know you really want to play with that truck because you are working so hard to hold yourself up.”* | *A physical therapist holds a child’s hips so he can play at the table and tells the child, “You’re so strong!”* | *A physical therapist doesn’t involve a motivation to stand and simply has the child practicing standing next to an empty table.* |

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| **INT2. Practitioners promote the child’s social development by encouraging the child to initiate or sustain positive interactions with other children and adults during routines and activities through modeling, teaching, feedback, or other types of guided support.** | The practitioner promotes positive social interactions so that the child will experience predictable social responses that will contribute to growth and learning. | *A Head Start teacher helps a peer respond to a child’s gestures by verbally translating his intention and desires, then modeling for the peer how to respond to the child.* | *A Head Start teacher tells peers to be friendly to the child who uses gestures to communicate.* | *A Head Start teacher assigns her assistant teacher to attend to the child who uses gestures to communicate.* |
| *An early interventionist works with the parents in the home to recognize and encourage a child’s engagement with her brother by providing positive, descriptive feedback about the child’s positive social behavior.* | *An early interventionist involves the parents in the home by having them observe how she promotes the child’s social development.* | *The early interventionist works alone with the child on her social development without involving the family.* |

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| **INT3. Practitioners promote the child’s communication development by observing, interpreting, responding contingently, and providing natural consequences for the child's verbal and non-verbal communication and by using language to label and expand on the child’s requests, needs, preferences, or interests.** | The practitioner uses language to label and expand on what the child is focusing on to contribute to greater language development in the child. | *A speech language pathologist teaches the child to use the sign for “apple” by placing the apple slices the child wants slightly out of reach and waiting briefly for the child to use the sign.* | *A speech language pathologist repeats the sign for “apple” multiple times to prompt the child to request the apple.* | *A speech language pathologist shows the child picture cards with five different signs and has the child imitate them one at a time.* |
| *A Head Start teacher helps peers to recognize, interpret, and respond to a nonverbal child’s communicative attempts.* | *A Head Start teacher tells children in the class to get a teacher’s attention if a nonverbal peer needs help.* | *A Head Start teacher tells a child to “worry about yourself” when the child asks him what another child is saying.* |

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| **INT4. Practitioners promote the child’s cognitive development by observing, interpreting, and responding intentionally to the child's exploration, play, and social activity by joining in and expanding on the child's focus, actions, and intent.** | The practitioner promotes cognitive development in the child by extending language and cognitive activity and adding new actions, information, and language to interactions. | *An early childhood teacher extends and expands on children’s play by showing how things work, and demonstrating other actions they can perform with objects.* | *An early childhood teacher joins children in the block center by imitating their actions and some of the words they are using.* | *An early childhood teacher observes children playing in the dramatic play area, and participates in the play using the same roles and vocabulary they tend to use every day. Then the teacher moves on to a new area of the classroom.* |
| *A Head Start teacher encourages a child to tell her how two objects are the same and how they are different.* | *A Head Start teacher tells children they will be making animals like the ones in the story, and they can make any one they choose.* | *A Head Start teacher plans an art activity where children paste pre-cut shapes to make Humpty Dumpty.* |
| *An early interventionist joins the child’s exploration in the sand box, engaging in parallel play to show her how the truck disappears under the sand and then reappears.* | *An early interventionist sits next to the child in the sandbox and takes over the child’s play and shows the child how to dig with a shovel using hand-over-hand assistance.* | *An early interventionist takes the sand funnel away from a child to instead have the child practice pouring differing amounts of sand from a cup into a bucket.* |

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| **INT5. Practitioners promote the child’s problem-solving behavior by observing, interpreting, and scaffolding in response to the child’s growing level of autonomy and self-regulation.** | The practitioner fosters problem-solving by observing the child’s approach to the problem, interpreting the child’s thinking, and then responding with an open-ended question to push the child to a deeper level of thinking. | *An early childhood teacher helps a group of children play their activity and identify what their roles will be as they play.* | *An early childhood teacher gathers three children who are having a difficult time deciding what to play in the dramatic play area, and tells them they should all play house together.* | *An early childhood teacher tells a group of children who are arguing over what activity and roles they will play to find a different activity that they can all agree on.* |
| *An assistant teacher who observes two children engaging in aggressive behavior in the quiet center joins them and say, “Let’s think together about how we can solve this problem.”* | *An assistant teacher engages in conflict resolution with a pair of children fighting over a toy. She finds out who had the toy first and gives that child the toy.* | *An assistant teacher places a child who displays aggressive behavior in a time out until she is calmed down.* |

\*Note: Source of the examples in the expected / proficient column are adapted from: DEC (2016). DEC recommended practices in early intervention and early childhood special education with examples.

## **References**

DEC (2016). DEC recommended practices in early intervention and early childhood special education with examples. Retrieved from: <https://divisionearlychildhood.egnyte.com/dl/v7NSuEwqYX>

Metz, A., Bartley, L., Blase, K., and Fixen, D. (2011). Handout 2: Practice profile examples. Retrieved from: <http://implementation.fpg.unc.edu/sites/implementation.fpg.unc.edu/files/resources/AIHub-Handout2-PracticeProfileExamples.pdf>

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