Environment Rating Scales:
Implementation of Interaction Practices

Why these practices are important for children's development

Warm and sincere interactions are at the heart of meaningful relationships. Strong and supportive relationships are integral to children's lifelong learning and healthy social and emotional development.

Key Implementation Practices

- Provide support and encouragement for children's efforts while supervising children, both indoors and outdoors. Focus on children's interests, show appreciation for what they do, and individualize according to their abilities.

- Create a warm and relaxed atmosphere that clearly gives children a message that you enjoy being with them. Have fun and laugh with children by singing songs and playing games (play peek-a-boo with infants and young toddlers and make up silly rhymes with older children).

- Respond sensitively and respectfully to children's verbal cues (when a child says, "More milk" you can say, "Oh, you'd like more milk") and non-verbal cues (when a child is clinging to your leg, say, "Do you need a hug?")

- Provide appropriate physical contact according to children's individual moods, personalities, and preferences (hugs, high fives, pats on the back, etc.). Be physically accessible to children by being near them as often as possible.

- Point out and encourage positive interactions among children ("Thank you for helping your friend clean up the blocks!" and "That was really nice of you to share your crayons with your sister.")

- Intervene to stop negative peer interactions and help children solve problems in a satisfying way (when a child takes another child's toy, say, "That is your friend's truck. Let's go find you another truck.")

- Have appropriate expectations for children's ages and stages and ensure older children understand rules and expectations. Explain in simple terms why children can't do something ("Sit on the chair, so you don't fall down.")

Additional Resources

- Promoting Powerful Interactions Between Parents and Children: https://www.naeyc.org/resources/pubs/tyc/aug2018/promoting-powerful-interactions
- Building Positive Teacher-Child Relationships: http://csefel.vanderbilt.edu/briefs/wwb12.pdf
- Getting Preschoolers to Share: https://pathways.org/getting-preschoolers-share/



