

Introduction

During this time of remote instruction, teaching teams will need to demonstrate increased flexibility regarding how to support preschool children with Individualized Education Programs (IEPs). Teaching teams may need to ask the family/caregiver more questions to gather information and use a range of strategies to support families/caregivers and children. Teaching teams may also need to provide individual sessions with family/caregivers and children to work on specific skills. This document provides guidance on how to (a) support the progress of individual children academically, socially and emotionally, (b) plan for opportunities for the child to participate in developmentally appropriate activities and (c) support families/caregivers by modeling and providing strategies for them to work on IEP goals with their child.

This guidance may be helpful for teaching teams that are new to working in a preschool special education classroom. It can also help to build upon the practices currently being implemented by teaching teams working with preschool children with IEPs.

Pre-Planning

In preparation for conversations with the family/caregiver, teaching teams should:

- Prepare questions for the family/caregiver regarding their experience with remote learning, e.g., “What has worked well?”, “What would they like to see improve?”;
- Review ongoing assessment data to identify child’s strengths and areas for growth so you can determine where they are and what support is needed to make progress;
- Review with the family/caregiver the goals or skills that they would like to focus on during a session. Based on the child’s progress, ask whether they would like to continue working on a particular goal or prefer to work on another;
- Prepare questions for the family/caregiver regarding prior experiences, interests and concerns as they work with their child on this goal or skill;
- Determine the prerequisite skills the child will need prior to working on this goal to share with the family/caregiver using family-friendly language;
- Identify a list of materials that the family/caregiver might use with the child;
- Consider the language you may use to prompt or model for the family/caregiver as you work through the procedure for the session.

Please note that targeted skills/concepts in individual sessions with children should not be separate, but should be directly linked/aligned to the current unit of study being used in the classroom. In addition, activities should be based on a child's developmental level, IEP goals, information provided by the family and individual interests.

Format for Session

- Ask the family/caregiver questions to gather information, e.g., “How has the child been doing since their last session?”;
- Identify the IEP goal(s) or skills that you will be working on/continue to work on during this session;
- Explain the procedure to the family/caregiver for the session, including any strategies you will be using, e.g., prompting, hand-over-hand support, positive reinforcement;
- Make sure to validate and recognize the work of the child and the family/caregiver whenever possible.
- Model/provide verbal steps for procedure as you work with the family/caregiver and the child

End of Session

Toward the end of each remote session, the teaching team and the family/caregiver should discuss together what the next session will look like and what the family/caregiver can work on in the interim. Make sure to talk about how the session went and to discuss next steps with the family/caregiver. This includes:

- Discuss how to know when the child has made progress;
- Identify areas for generalization across other routine activities;
- Coordinate the schedule for the next session with the family/caregiver;
- Discuss what skills you will work on for the next session or how you will continue to work on the current skill;
- Talk with family/caregiver about how some skills may need to be worked on over a course of sessions;
- Identify materials that you might be able to use during the next session;
- Share any resources that might be helpful to the family/caregiver

Overview of Individual Session Planning Template

Lesson: This should be the lesson that you are focusing on for your whole group, small group and individual sessions.

Type: Individual Session/Activity

Domain: <i>What domain of development will be the focus for this session?</i>	The New York State Prekindergarten Learning Standards Focus Standard(s) <i>What standards will be addressed during the session?</i>
IEP Goal/Objective: <i>What IEP goal will you focus on during this session?</i>	
Prerequisite Skills: <i>What prior knowledge and skills does the child need to build upon in order to be successful in this session?</i>	
Resources to support teaching teams in identifying prerequisite skills: <ul style="list-style-type: none">● Head Start Early Learning Outcomes Framework: Ages Birth to Five● Early Learning Guidelines	
Connection to the Curriculum and the Child: <i>How can you use your knowledge of the child and the curriculum to continue to make connections or go deeper around a child's interests?</i>	
Family/Caregiver Questions: <i>Explain to the family/caregiver that before you begin, you would like to ask a few questions. For an initial session, questions should focus on gathering information regarding the child's current functioning and interests and ways to support collaboration, coaching and communication with families/caregivers. For follow-up sessions, you should ask questions regarding how the child has been doing and if they have observed any progress.</i>	Notes: <i>Document notes from conversation with family/caregiver.</i>
Family/Caregiver Support (At Start of Session) <i>Review with the family/caregiver the IEP goal(s) that you would like to focus on during the session. Explain to the family/caregiver what strategies and supports you will be using during the session; e.g., prompting, positive reinforcement. Make sure to model these strategies and supports for families/caregivers.</i>	

Discuss with the family/caregiver what you have noticed about the child, e.g., interests, disinterests, sensitivities, and that you have incorporated this knowledge into the activities for the session.

Strategy 1: _____

Provide support or strategy being used during session. Be sure to include specific examples to model or share with families/caregivers.

Strategy 2: _____

Provide support or strategy being used during session. Be sure to include specific examples to model or share with families/caregivers.

Materials: What materials, e.g., toys, games, etc., will be needed for this session? Consider materials that the family/caregiver has in the home that they can use to work on this skill/goal.

Verbal Prompts/Language:

Add in specific vocabulary and language that the family/caregiver should be using when working on this skill/goal.

Procedure: Write the steps for the session, including instructional strategies, learning tasks, key questions, key transitions, child supports, assessment strategies, etc.

Possible Generalization Strategies: Identify areas for generalization across routine activities to share with the family/caregiver.

Prior to Next Session: Identify what the next session will look like and what the family/caregiver can work on in the interim. Share with the family/caregiver that they should continue to practice this skill with their child before the next time you meet together. Encourage them to think of opportunities throughout their daily routine to model and practice this skill with their child. Make sure to highlight that practicing these skills will help their child make progress toward their goals.

Additional Activities for Families:

If the family/caregiver seems open, offer additional activities. When offering these activities, check that the family/caregiver has a clear understanding of how to implement the activity and how it relates to the goal or skill. Make sure to highlight the strategies and support, including modeling or prompting, that the family/caregiver can use during the activity.

List suggestions here for additional activities that you can discuss at the end of the session and that the family/caregiver can do to work on this skill/goal. This can include ideas for future lesson plans you will create or ways that the family/caregiver can work on this skill/goal to help generalize this skill.

When you list these activities make sure that you discuss exactly how this activity will work on that skill/goal. Be specific with the language families/caregivers should be using and the strategies that would help support their child.

Family/Caregiver Support/Questions (At End of Session):

For next session, make sure to:

- Confirm with the family/caregiver the day and time for your next session
- Discuss with the family/caregiver what the next session will look like and what the family/caregiver can work on before you meet again:
 - Discuss how to know when the child has made progress
 - Identify areas for generalization across other routine activities when the child has met the criteria for progress
 - Consider what IEP goals will be worked on during the next session so you can try to schedule the session during the actual time of the home routine/activity where the goals/skills can be worked on. For example, setting the table for lunch, putting clothes away after doing the laundry.

Resources to share with families/caregivers: What books, digital resources, etc. will you share with the family/caregiver?

