

Enhancing Interactions with Young Dual Language Learners: *Connecting with Dual Language Learners*

Use these ideas and questions to build on what you've learned and extend your practice.

THINK ABOUT IT!

■ **Self-Reflection**

Use these questions to think about your own practice.

■ **Reflect with Others**

Supervisors, directors, coaches, and teachers/providers can be reflective partners.

■ **The Power of Practice**

Invite a colleague to join you; observe or record each other and share ideas.

REFLECTIVE QUESTIONS

- Have I ever been somewhere I didn't know the language? How did that experience make me feel?
- What are some ways I build relationships with children who speak a different language?
- What are some ideas for how I might use additional supports to enhance my verbal communication with dual language learners?
- How might I strengthen my practices around providing opportunities for children to use their home languages in my program?

TRY IT OUT!

Reflect on how you connect with dual language learners in your care.

Select one child who is a dual language learner to focus on for this activity.

Spend one week observing this child and your interactions with this child.

Keep a journal where you record descriptions of your observations.

At the end of the week, ask yourself:

- In what ways were my interactions responsive to this child?
- How did I enhance my verbal communication? What nonverbal supports or words in the child's home language did I use?
- What opportunities did I provide for this child to use his/her home language?

List specific examples of when and how you connected with this child.

How Did It Go?

What did you learn about how you connect with this child? How do you think this child feels in your program? What are your areas of strength in connecting with dual language learners? How might you improve your practices around creating a welcoming atmosphere and building supportive relationships with dual language learners?

What Next?

Practice again. Try this exercise with each of the dual language learners in your care. Check out the next pack in this bundle, *Scaffolding Dual Language Learning*, to learn specific strategies to support dual language learners' understanding and development of language.