PD2GO
A PROJECT OF
**Early Education
Effectiveness Exchange**

FACILITATOR'S GUIDE
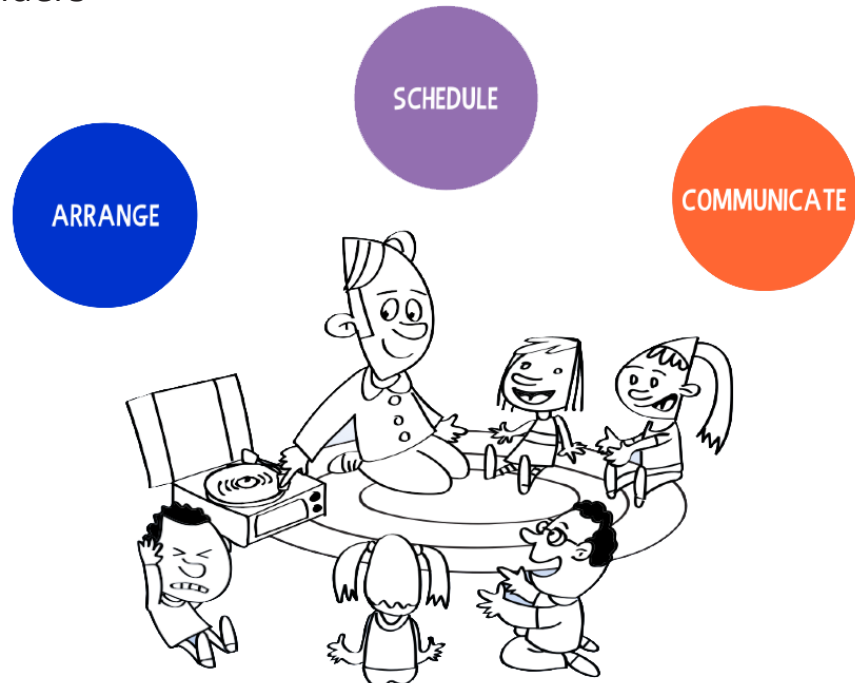INCLUSIVE ENVIRONMENTS

INTENTIONAL INTERACTIONS IN TEACHING

Including All Children: *Inclusive Environments*

WHAT'S IN THIS PD2GO PACK?

Young children learn best when their individual learning needs are met. Teachers/Providers can create environments that promote individualized interactions that respond to children's needs. This pack offers teachers/providers ways to enhance their learning environments to promote responsive interactions.

Your Participants Will...
increase their capacity to create a learning environment that promotes full access and supportive interactions for all children.

SCHEDULE

ARRANGE

COMMUNICATE

SUPPORTING MATERIALS

Facilitator's Guide Everything you need to facilitate this PD2GO presentation on *Inclusive Environments*, including an interactive presentation page along with step-by-step presenter's notes.

Coaching Corner One-page resource with self-reflection and practice opportunities that can be explored individually, with peers, and in professional development sessions.

Additional resource materials related to this pack provide opportunities to explore and expand your skills and knowledge through **Digging Deeper**, **Resource Links**, and **Family Connections**.

HOW TO USE THIS FACILITATOR'S GUIDE

This Facilitator's Guide will provide you with step-by-step information on how to present this session using the interactive presentation page and downloadable materials specific to this PD2GO pack. We recommend opening the pack presentation as you go through this Facilitator's Guide.

Presentation Information

Text written in italics is meant to be spoken out loud during the course of the presentation.
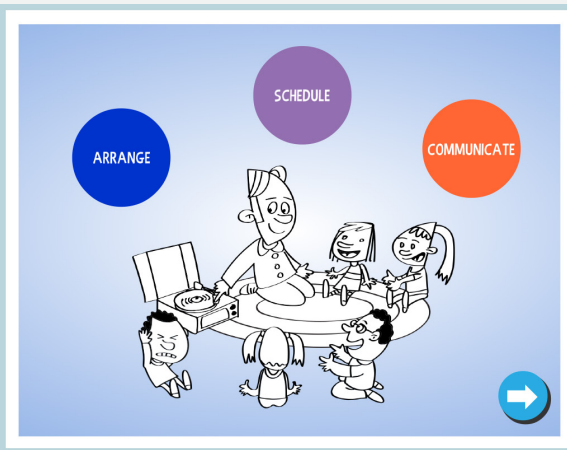
Other text, marked with this icon ⓘ, offers important information such as instructions or suggested answers to facilitate the presentation of this PD2GO pack.

THE INTERACTIVE PRESENTATION PAGE

The presentation page includes the following elements:

■ **Steps**

Click on each number icon to begin the section of the presentation—use the presenter's notes in this guide to facilitate each step of the presentation.

Including All Children

Inclusive Environments

1 START
2 CONNECT
3 LEARN
4 PRACTICE
5 EXPAND

SCHEDULE
ARRANGE
COMMUNICATE

DOWNLOADABLE MATERIALS

■ **In This Pack**

Click on the downloadable materials hyperlink to access all materials related to this presentation.

■ **In This Bundle**

Click on the downloadable materials hyperlink to access all additional resources and materials that can be used with this presentation and other related packs.

EXPANDING ON THIS PD2GO PACK

This presentation on *Inclusive Environments* can be used individually or in conjunction with the related pack in the bundle, *Individually Appropriate Practice*. Additional resources and materials in this bundle (*Digging Deeper, Resource Links,* and *Family Connections*) are designed to extend skills and knowledge around these related packs, provide links to resources, and promote partnerships with families.

MATERIALS

In this pack, you will find:

[Download all (4.3 MB)]

⊙ **Facilitator's Guide** *(4.3 MB)*
Everything you need to facilitate this PD2GO presentation on Inclusive Environments, including an interactive presentation page along with step-by-step presenter's notes.

⊙ **Coaching Corner** *(150 KB)*
One-page resource with self-reflection and practice opportunities that can be explored individually, with peers, and in professional development sessions.

⊙ **Handout: Creating an Inclusive Environment** *(370 KB)*

In this bundle, you will find:

[Download all (290 KB)]

Additional resource materials related to this pack provide opportunities to explore and expand your skills and knowledge. The resources include:

⊙ **Digging Deeper** *(230 KB)*

⊙ **Family Connections** *(270 KB)*

⊙ **Resource Links** *(160 KB)*

START

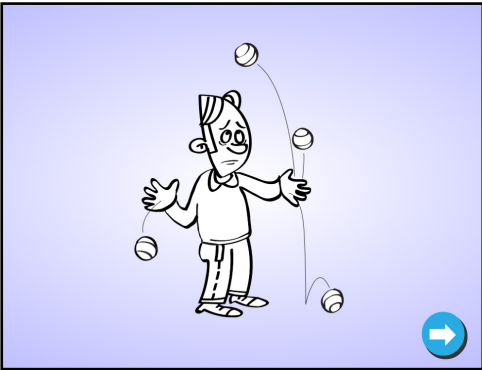| PRESENTATION SEQUENCE	FACILITATOR'S NOTES

[4 min]   **CLICK** →   **Step 1 - Start**

Facilitator: *Have you ever had a day when you felt as if there were just too many demands placed on you and you couldn't meet them all? Has this ever happened in your classroom?*

CLICK →

Facilitator: *We are called on to meet the learning needs of all children. However, sometimes this can feel overwhelming. Some children might want to paint while others want to use modeling clay. One child may need extra support with using scissors, at the same time another needs support while playing with his friends. Sometimes we might find ourselves repeating directions, and other times we might feel as if there are a few children we are just not reaching. When this happens, we need solutions.*

CLICK →

Facilitator: *Often, the key to meeting individual learning needs is right within the learning space. Small changes to the learning environment can have a big impact on our interactions with children.*

CLICK →

Step 1

Think of a day when you have had too many demands.

STEP 1: *Continued*
START

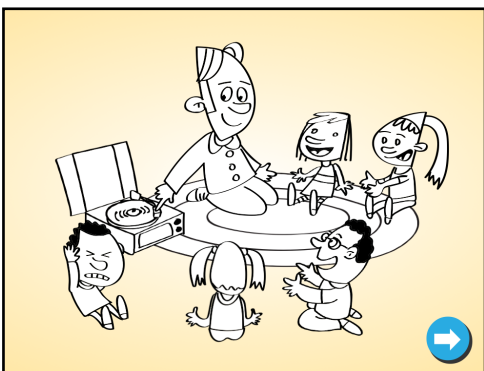| PRESENTATION SEQUENCE	FACILITATOR'S NOTES
Intentional planning creates environments that meet individual learning needs. Go to step 2: CONNECT	**Facilitator:** *By intentionally planning for individual learning needs, we can create an environment that meets the needs of all learners.*

STEP 2:
CONNECT

PRESENTATION SEQUENCE	FACILITATOR'S NOTES
Step 2 The learning environment is everything the child experiences in the learning space.	[3 min] **CLICK** **Step 2 - Connect** **Facilitator:** *The learning environment includes everything the child experiences in the learning space. Elements like the room arrangement and schedule are among those that shape our interactions with children. Let's look at and listen to Eric and how his environment impacts interactions with Benjamin.* **CLICK** ⓘ Reference handout. 📄 ***"Creating an Inclusive Environment"*** **Facilitator:** *It is circle time and the children are singing and clapping. Benjamin sits with the group, but he is scrunching his face and holding his hands over his ears. Halfway through the song he begins to moan. Eric has noticed that Benjamin begins to act like this whenever the volume in the room increases. How can Eric create an inclusive environment and provide individualized support for Benjamin?*

STEP 2: CONNECT *Continued*

| PRESENTATION SEQUENCE	FACILITATOR'S NOTES
	(i) Pause and engage participants in a discussion related to changing the environment. Some possible discussion points may be as follows:
	▪ Place Benjamin within the group away from the music and/or speaker.
	▪ Offer a choice to use a different interest area away from the noise.
	▪ Give Benjamin a visual card that he can use to signal that it is too loud and model using it for him.
	▪ Teach Benjamin to ask to turn the music down.
An inclusive environment considers the learning needs of all children. Go to step 3: LEARN	**Facilitator:** *There are several changes Eric could make that would support Benjamin in the learning environment.* CLICK ➡ **Facilitator:** *By examining Benjamin's learning needs, we can make small changes that help him to fully participate in learning experiences. An inclusive environment is one that recognizes and responds to the learning needs of all children.*

STEP 3: LEARN

PRESENTATION SEQUENCE	FACILITATOR'S NOTES
Step 3 Creating Inclusive Environments: • Arrange the Environment • Schedule within the Environment • Communicate through the Environment ➡	[3 min] CLICK ➡ **Step 3 - Learn** **Facilitator:** *Intentionally creating an inclusive environment means thinking in advance about the individual needs of children and how you can make decisions that benefit the entire group.*

STEP 3: LEARN *Continued*

PRESENTATION SEQUENCE	FACILITATOR'S NOTES
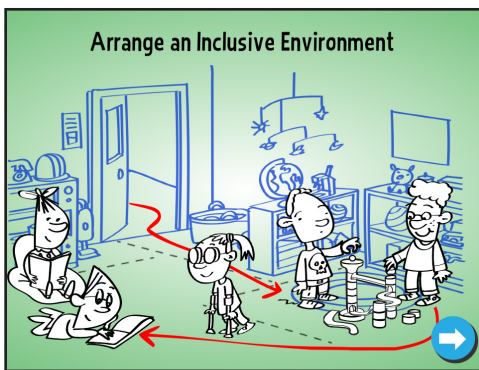
Facilitator: *Think about how you can best support each child as well as the group in each of the three steps of creating an inclusive environment:*

- *Arrange the physical environment*
- *Schedule within the environment for individual needs*
- *Communicate through the environment*

CLICK ➡

Arrange an Inclusive Environment

Facilitator: *Arrange: Arrange the physical environment in ways that support children's individual needs.*

Look for solutions to individual needs by making changes to the physical set-up of the room to create an environment that is engaging but not over-stimulating. Ask yourself, "What changes can I make to support children's learning and interactions?" Consider the following points:

- *Make sure the room is easy to navigate—especially for students who have difficulties moving around—and arrange furniture and equipment to scaffold desired behavior, such as keeping aprons in the art area or cubbies by the door.*

- *Create spaces for movement and spaces for quiet time.*

- *Include a variety of materials that appeal to a wide range of interests and needs across the interest areas. For example, you may include differently sized blocks in the block area and several types of writing utensils in the art area. Including a larger variety of materials allows you to meet a wider range of learning needs.*

- *Make sure the lighting supports the learning activities.*

STEP 3: LEARN *Continued*
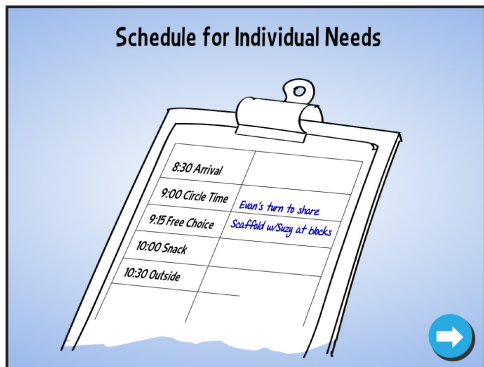
| PRESENTATION SEQUENCE	FACILITATOR'S NOTES
	Facilitator: *An environment that makes it easier for an individual child to explore and interact will make it easier for all children to explore and interact.*

Schedule for Individual Needs

8:30 Arrival
9:00 Circle Time
9:15 Free Choice | *Evan's turn to share*
                   Scaffold w/Suzy at blocks
10:00 Snack
10:30 Outside

CLICK ➡

Facilitator: ***Schedule:*** *Organize your daily schedule in ways that meet the needs of individual children.*

As we consider changes to the arrangement of the classroom, we also may consider modifying the schedule to help us meet individual learning needs.

- *Schedule activities with consideration to what happens before and afterward to increase children's engagement and balance their level of activity*
- *Create opportunities for one-on-one time with each child*
- *Allow time for children to engage and participate in activities*

CLICK ➡ *Schedules that are predictable but have some room for flexibility benefit the entire group.*

Communicate through the Environment
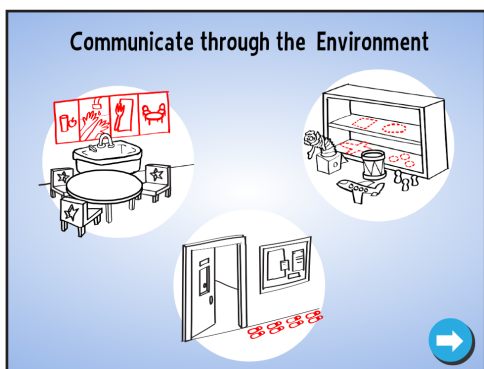
Facilitator: ***Communicate:*** *Use visual supports to enhance communication.*

Often, small changes to the environment, such as adding visual supports, can enhance communication, relieve uncertainty, and support children's comprehension and learning. Some ideas might be:

- *Post pictures to show children where to sit or to walk.*
- *Provide children with picture cards to communicate, especially if they need assistance with language.*

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STEP 3: LEARN *Continued*

PRESENTATION SEQUENCE	FACILITATOR'S NOTES
Planning for individual learning needs benefits all children in the group. Go to step 4: PRACTICE	**Facilitator:** • *Arrange the room to help communicate "next steps," such as putting waste baskets by paper towel dispensers, or placing cubbies near the door to communicate, "put your things here when you first arrive."* *Using the environment to communicate expectations of "how to" and "when to" can help increase children's confidence and set children up for success.* CLICK ➡ **Facilitator:** *Planning ahead for individual children's environmental learning needs benefits all children in the group.*

STEP 4: PRACTICE

PRESENTATION SEQUENCE	FACILITATOR'S NOTES
Step 4 Let's practice creating an inclusive environment.	[7 min] CLICK ➡ **Step 4 - Practice** **Facilitator:** *Now let's take a moment to examine some common classroom scenarios and practice creating an inclusive environment.*

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STEP 4:
PRACTICE *Continued*

PRESENTATION SEQUENCE	FACILITATOR'S NOTES
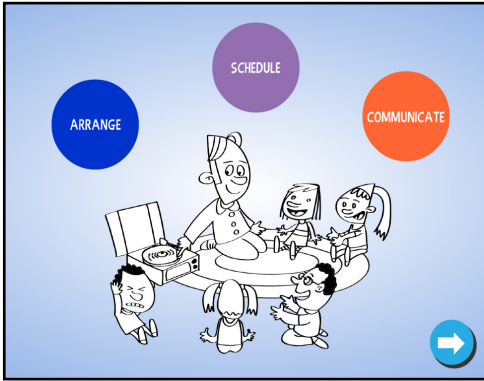
Facilitator: *Think back to Benjamin who had a difficult time during loud classroom activities. How can Eric use the three steps of creating an inclusive environment to provide individualized support for Benjamin?*

- *Arrange*
- *Schedule*
- *Communicate*

Refer to the handout, Creating an Inclusive Environment*, as a guide for you as you brainstorm ideas to support Benjamin. Write your ideas on the handout.*

Pause for participants to have time to write their ideas on the handout, then come back and discuss as a group. If discussion prompts are needed, refer to the following:

Arrange: *Invite the child to sit in circle area away from the music and/or speaker. This allows the child to still be part of the group.*
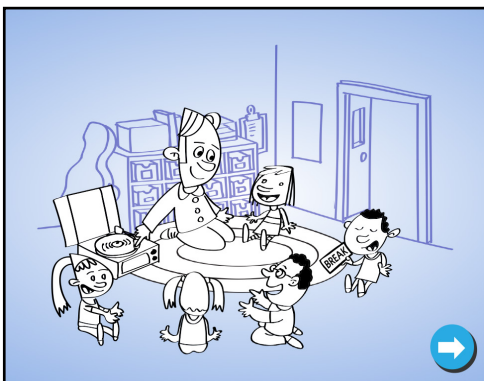
Schedule: *Offer the child choices of a new activity. Make sure that noisy activities are balanced with quieter activities.*

Communicate: *Give the child a visual card to use to signal that it is too loud. Teach the child to ask to turn the music down.*

CLICK

Facilitator: *Eric can arrange the room to provide seating for Benjamin within the group away from noise. Eric can schedule activities to allow Benjamin the choice to take a break away from loud noises. Eric can support communication by providing Benjamin a card with the word "break" on it that he can show when it is too loud.*

Now let's think about another child.

CLICK

STEP 4:
PRACTICE *Continued*

PRESENTATION SEQUENCE	FACILITATOR'S NOTES

Presentation: What is the need Ana is expressing?
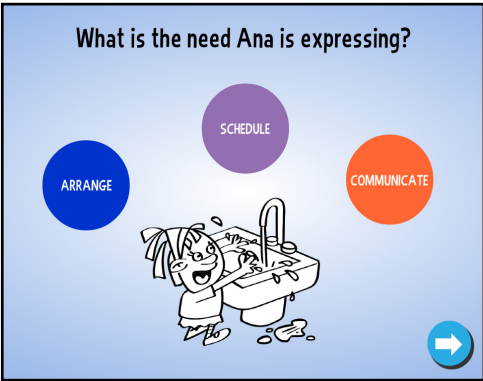
Facilitator: *During choice time, all the other children are engaged in interest areas. Instead of choosing an activity with her friends, Ana finds her way to the sink where she plays with water, even though the sink is supposed to be for hand washing only. Eric gets frustrated because he is constantly redirecting Ana to engage in the interest areas in the classroom. What can Eric do that might help meet Ana's learning needs?*

CLICK ➡

Facilitator: *Let's identify the need that Ana is expressing here.*

ⓘ Possible answer: Ana would like to explore water play and sensory experiences.

Ask participants to reflect on each of the following separately. The discussion should focus on the three strategies of arrange, schedule, and communicate:

Facilitator: *Arrange: What could Eric do to arrange the environment differently so that Ana can access water play?*

ⓘ Possible answer: Eric could add a sand and water table to the tiled space by the snack tables.

Facilitator: *Schedule: What can Eric do to give Ana time to explore water?*

ⓘ Possible answer: Eric could provide sensory experiences such as water table, sand play, and clay as choices throughout the day.

STEP 4:
PRACTICE   *Continued*

PRESENTATION SEQUENCE	FACILITATOR'S NOTES
	Facilitator: *Communicate: Is there anything that can be added to the environment to enhance communication?*
	ⓘ Possible answers: Eric could use a visual schedule to help communicate classroom routines. He could help Ana choose an activity by showing her picture cards with options for her to choose from.
	CLICK ➡
Small changes to the environment can increase active exploration. **Go to step 5: EXPAND**	**Facilitator:** *By making small changes through arranging, scheduling, and communicating, teachers can increase children's active exploration in the classroom.*

STEP 5:
EXPAND

PRESENTATION SEQUENCE	FACILITATOR'S NOTES
Step ⑤ Think about specific scenarios in your learning environment. ➡	[2 min] **CLICK** ➡ **Step 5 - Expand**
	Facilitator: *Now let's take a moment to think about the children in your group and identify their specific needs. What can you do to build a more inclusive environment to support a child's individual learning needs?*

STEP 5:
EXPAND   *Continued*

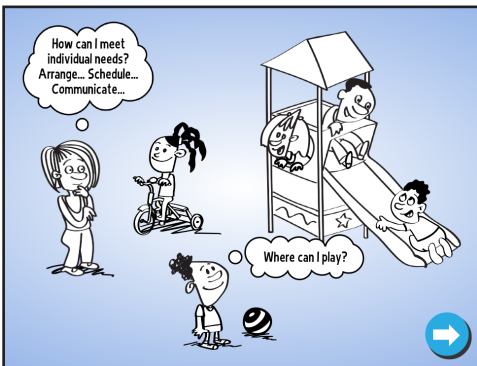| PRESENTATION SEQUENCE	FACILITATOR'S NOTES
	Facilitator: *Begin by choosing one of the three strategies (arrange, schedule, communicate) to implement in your early learning setting. Next, identify one action step you will take within the next week to implement this new strategy to support a specific learning need of a child or children in your group.*
	(i) If participants are having trouble identifying a strategy, possible prompts include:
	▪ What are some different ways you can arrange, schedule, or communicate through the learning environment?
	▪ Where in your schedule can you allow for more time?
	▪ How might you adapt an interest area?
	▪ What visual support can you add to enhance communication?
	CLICK →
	Facilitator: *Identify one or two changes to the learning environment you can make this week that might help one or more children. Then write about what you will do to make that change. Share the idea with a partner or your table group.*
	CLICK →
Arrange, Schedule, and Communicate within the environment to meet children's needs.	**Facilitator:** *Inclusive environments are adaptive; they are responsive to the needs of all children. Small changes can go a long way to creating inclusive environments. Remember to arrange, schedule, and communicate within the environment to meet the needs of all children.*

THIS PD2GO PACK WAS INFORMED BY THE FOLLOWING RESOURCES:

Mandelstam, J. (2010). Early childhood inclusion what it looks like; how it's done. *The special edge newsletter*, 23 (2). Retrieved from http://www.calstat.org/publications/article_detail.php?a_id=127&nl_id=18

Dinnebeil, L. A., Boat, M., & Bae, Y. (2013). Integrating principles of universal design into the early childhood curriculum. *Dimensions of early childhood*, 41(1). Retrieved from http://www.southernearlychildhood.org/upload/pdf/Dimensions_Vol41_1_Dinnebeil.pdf