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## **Welcome to the Early Childhood Intervention (ECI) Program**

The ECI program follows rules and regulations established by the state and federal government, which require the use of evidence-based practices. Research in child learning and development has helped us to see the value of everyday activities that occur in your home or in your community as sources for children's learning opportunities.

Together we will identify the places and activities that are of interest to you and your child. Research has shown that, just like adults, children are more likely to pay attention to adults who are important in their life and learn doing activities that they find fun, interesting, and within their typical routines. We may meet in a variety of places and during activities that will help us to naturally work on outcomes that you have identified as hoping to achieve. Frequently these visits will occur at home, but may also include parks, restaurants, grocery stores, child care settings, or anywhere else that you identify as a natural learning environment.

During each ECI visit you also will be able to expect the following coaching format. All visits will involve you, your child, and an ECI coach. Coaching is a strategy used to help us, as adults, with improving existing abilities, developing new skills, and gaining further understanding of how to incorporate practices in other situations.

**Planning:** We will begin by reviewing our plan from the prior visit and discuss what has been tried or accomplished between visits. We will decide what we want to make sure to address in the present visit.

**Observation:** Your ECI coach will spend some time observing your child in your everyday activities as you are able to show us some of the activities that you all have tried over the past week. We also will want to hear if ideas or strategies shared in the prior visit were successful or not so helpful. Your ECI coach will then try some strategies and model an activity or strategy for you while offering explanations on why this activity/strategy may be helpful time to answer any questions.

**Practice:** We will then be able to practice the activity/strategy with help from each other. We will be able to revise and/or problem solve together. We want you and your child to feel very comfortable with all activities/strategies.

**Reflection:** Prior to the conclusion of every visit, your ECI coach will ask you about expanding upon the ideas/strategies of the day and you all can jot down a plan on how

to incorporate into your child's routines in between our ECI visits. We also want to take time to answer any questions.

**Feedback:** The last 10 minutes of every visit will be spent together with your ECI coach documenting in your child's record. We will provide you with questions that we are responding to as we write your child's progress note. We want to collaborate with you and share your thoughts in your child's notes. Please sit with your ECI coach and share your feedback. Your ECI coach will read back the note to you and together you all will clearly indicate your plan for what will happen in-between visits, as well as at the next visit.

You are such an important person in your child's life and you know your child best. We want to work closely with you to figure out what opportunities your child has to take part in your daily activities, what he/she likes to do, and what you and your family are doing and can do to help him/her take part in these activities. We will never work in isolation with your child because quite honestly, we are not the ones that will make a difference with your child. Every time you interact with your child, whether playing, dressing, bathing, feeding, or going on outings, you are impacting his/her learning and development. As ECI coaches, we hope to provide you with some additional guidance and support which only enrich what you do every day.

*You make a difference  
each and every day  
in the life of your child!*

Thank you for inviting us to be a part of your life!

Attachments:

- Documentation Sample Questions
- Articles produced by Florida State University:
  1. **“The Home Field Advantage in Early Childhood Intervention”**
  2. **“Do the Math: Who Practices His Speech More?”**
  3. **“A Day in Our Life...”**



## The Home Field Advantage in Early Intervention

Have you noticed that “home field advantage” plays a major role in who wins a sporting event? A football team from Minnesota has more practice making a touchdown in the snow than a team from Florida. Basketball games on the home court include loyal fans and familiar locker rooms. Baseball players have a favorite bat to use when they need a hit. These sports examples illustrate the importance of the “natural environment” for athletes striving to perform their best.



Above: Another win at the ballpark!

The concept of “natural environments” can be applied to early intervention for young children with special needs and their families. Children are most secure and learn best when they are with familiar adults, using typical toys and materials to complete their everyday activities and routines. When an early intervention EI provider comes to the child’s home or childcare

center and joins the normal, everyday routines, the child has the “home field advantage.”

The concept of natural environments is more than the place that routines occur. “The home field advantage” includes the activities and routines and how the caregivers and children participate in them. Learning opportunities occur throughout the day as children play, eat, get dressed, chase the dog, wave good-bye, climb stairs, and help with chores. Adults can coach the child by repeating actions, naming objects, or providing more practice in any of these routines. The early intervention service providers help family members and caregivers learn the best coaching techniques to help the child. Learning new skills in daily routines such as bath time or mealtime is an effective and time saving way that EI provider help parents and caregivers teach their child.

The family does not have to purchase special equipment either. The EI provider simply guides the caregiver to select pieces of furniture or toys that the child is already used to, and incorporates them into the things the family does... watching football, cooking, or working in the yard so the child can “perform” like a professional!



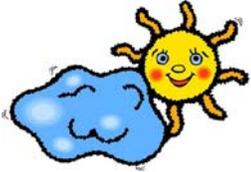
# Who Practices His Speech More? Do The Math!

## Michael Miguel

DAY	MINUTES	MINUTES		
<b>MON</b>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Names his clothes while getting dressed and the food for breakfast with mom.</li> <li>▪ Labels stores during drive to childcare.</li> <li>▪ Tells friends "hi," sings songs and shares picture book at nap.</li> <li>▪ Plays card game with big brother after school.</li> <li>▪ Tells good night story to dad.</li> </ul>	10 min. 5 min. 30 min. 10 min. 5 min.	
<b>TUES</b>	Names picture cards and reads books with SLP	30 min.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Names his body parts while getting dressed and the food for breakfast with mom.</li> <li>▪ Sings songs on tape during drive to childcare.</li> <li>▪ Tells friends "hi," sings songs and shares picture book at nap.</li> <li>▪ Plays outside with big brother after school naming toys.</li> <li>▪ Labels toys during bath.</li> </ul>	10 min. 5 min. 30 min. 10 min. 5 min.
<b>WED</b>			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Names his body parts while getting dressed and the food for breakfast with mom.</li> <li>▪ Labels stores during drive to childcare.</li> <li>▪ Tells friends "hi," sings songs and shares picture book at nap.</li> <li>▪ Plays card game with big brother after school.</li> <li>▪ Tells good night story to dad.</li> </ul>	10 min. 5 min. 30 min. 10 min. 5 min.
<b>THU</b>	Names picture cards and reads books with SLP	30 min.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Names his clothes while getting dressed and the food for breakfast with mom.</li> <li>▪ Sings songs on tape during drive to childcare.</li> <li>▪ Tells friends "hi," sings songs and shares picture book at nap.</li> <li>▪ Plays card game with big brother after school.</li> <li>▪ Labels toys during bath.</li> </ul>	10 min. 5 min. 30 min. 10 min. 5 min.
<b>FRI</b>			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Names his clothes while getting dressed.</li> <li>▪ Orders breakfast from menu at McDonalds.</li> <li>▪ Tells friends "hi," sings songs and shares picture book at nap.</li> <li>▪ Plays card game with Grandpa.</li> <li>▪ Tells good night story to Grandma.</li> </ul>	5 min. 5 min. 30 min. 10 min. 10 min.
<b>TOTAL TIME</b>		1 Hour		5 Hours



## A Day in Our Life...



Today, I woke Katie with a cheerful “Good morning” and smiled. She gurgled, smiled back and reached up to me. I scooped her up for a morning hug.... and was tickled by her squeaks and giggles. We hurried to the bathroom to change diapers, wash up and get dressed. She stretched and kicked while I smoothed lotion on her bottom and legs. We played peek-a-boo with a diaper. She dropped it, looked down to the floor and then she looked up and squealed as if to say “Gotcha! Now you get it!” She sat up and pushed her arms through her sleeves and clapped, “We’re done!”

Everyday Katie and I spend about fifteen minutes in our morning routine getting ready for childcare. It is fun, fast and focuses on the tasks at hand. The tasks are the same as most moms with 9-month-old babies, but ours has added purpose. I focus on the skills she needs to learn to improve her motor and communication skills. Katie has cerebral palsy and receives early intervention services. Working in our natural environment is not like going to therapy. Instead, our therapists and educators teach me ways I can help Katie learn. I teach her within our daily play and routines, and Katie learns functional skills in meaningful activities.



It makes sense to practice the skills she needs to learn while she is using them. In other words, we are doing the “stuff” of everyday life and Katie is learning from it. It’s easy, effective and fun.

In our morning routine, Katie practices:

- ✓ Taking turns with actions and objects
- ✓ Sitting up
- ✓ Putting on clothing
- ✓ Making sounds and gestures to get my attention
- ✓ Looking for objects out of sight
- ✓ Showing affection



And we also:

- ✓ Complete stretches for her legs

Teaching and learning in daily routines means I can be mom, Katie can be my daughter, and we can work with the therapists to teach me what I can do to help her. Playing, running errands, doing chores, reading stories, and cleaning house are opportunities for Katie to learn. Working with the therapists has helped me understand how important common activities are and just how much can be accomplished through “a day in our life.”

