

Introduction to Embedded Learning Frameworks and Their Use

Inclusion Institute 2026

Patricia Snyder, Tara McLaughlin, & John Forster

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Acknowledgments

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The opinions expressed are those of the learning facilitators, not the funding agency, and no official endorsement should be inferred.





WELCOME and INTRODUCTIONS



Overview of Part 1

- By the end of today's Part 1 session, you will be able to
 - Describe the rationales for the embedded learning support frameworks, their key parts, and the practices they include
 - Discuss key "drivers" and strategies that have been shown to support effective implementation
 - Analyze modifications and adaptations made over time based on 26+ years of implementation experiences, user feedback, and research studies
 - Share ways the framework and practices have been used successfully in local and state contexts in the U.S.
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Background and Rationales for the Embedded Learning Support Frameworks, Parts, and Practices

What is Embedded Instruction or Embedded Learning?

Learning opportunities for priority skills in everyday activities, routines, and transitions by people who regularly interact with the child to support engagement and learning and other desired distal outcomes

(e.g., belonging, friendships, self-determination, quality of life)



3R's of Early Learning

Relationships, Repetition, Routines™



RELATIONSHIPS

Nurturing and responsive interactions



REPETITION

Making neural connections by embedding learning in everyday activities and routines



ROUTINES

Predictable activities in everyday activities and routines that engage and motivate

Inclusion and Inclusive Practices

Inclusion *(noun)*

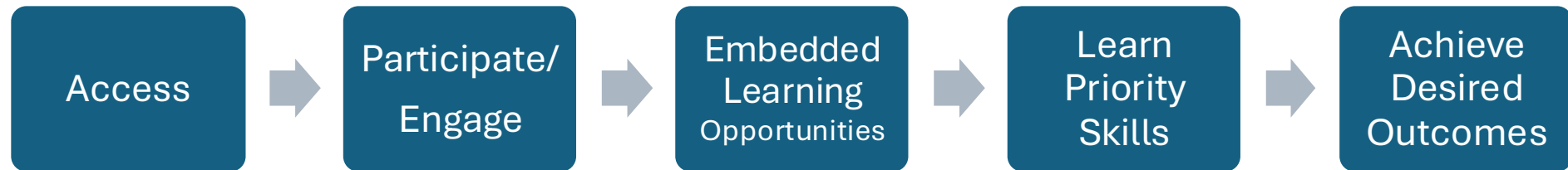
Action or state of being included within a group or structure

“Access”

Inclusive Practices *(verb)*

Actions or behaviors of people to support participation and engagement in group or structure

“Engagement”



Additional Rationales

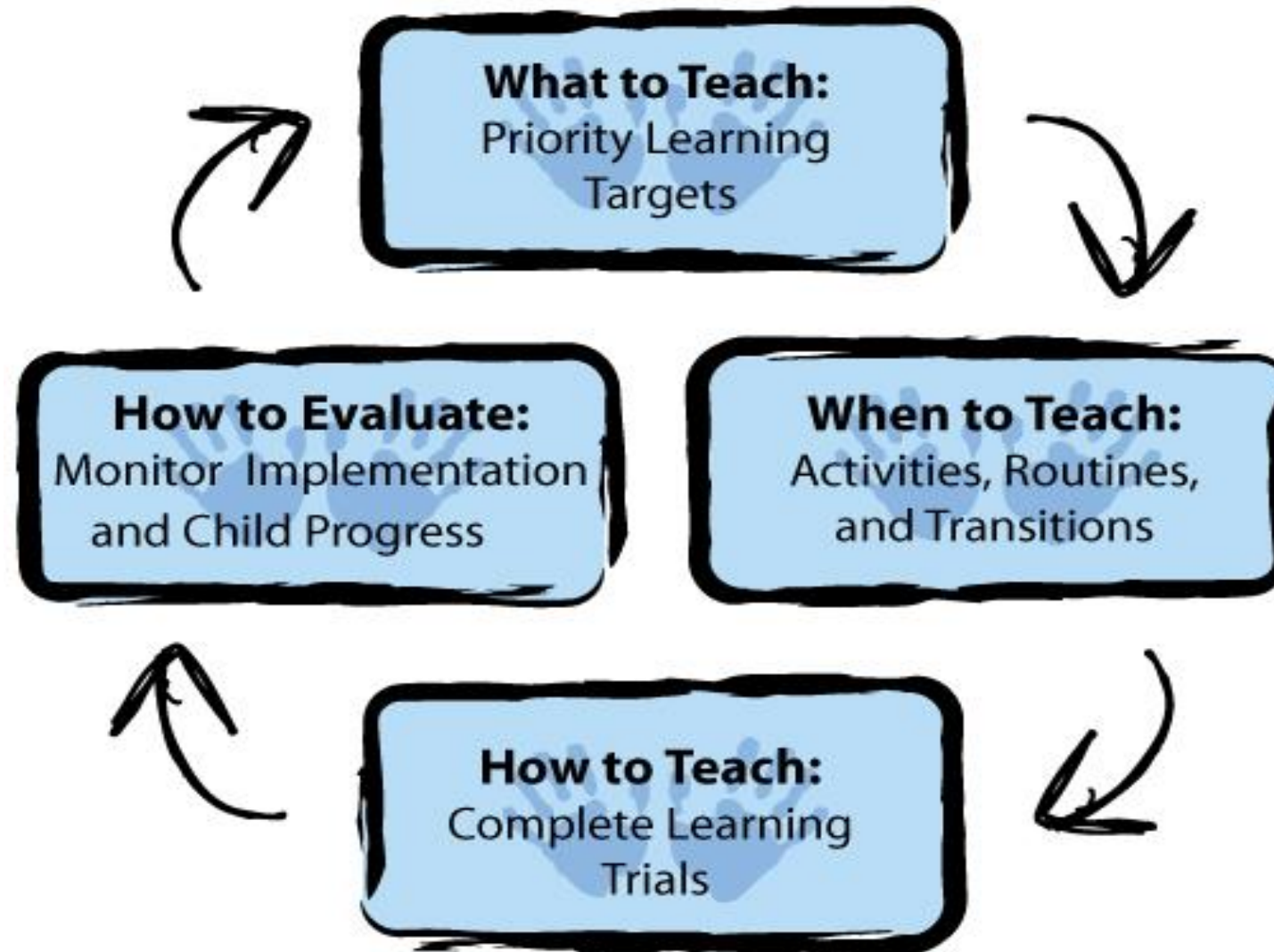
- Recommended practice¹
- Substantial empirical evidence²
- Supports “participation”
- Often not implemented as intended in routine practice without professional learning supports³

(¹ Division for Early Childhood, 2014; ² Balikci et al., 2026; Gulboy et al., 2023; Pretorius, McLaughlin et al., 2025; Snyder et al., 2015; Snyder et al., 2018; Snyder et al., 2026, ³US DHHS & DOE, 2015)

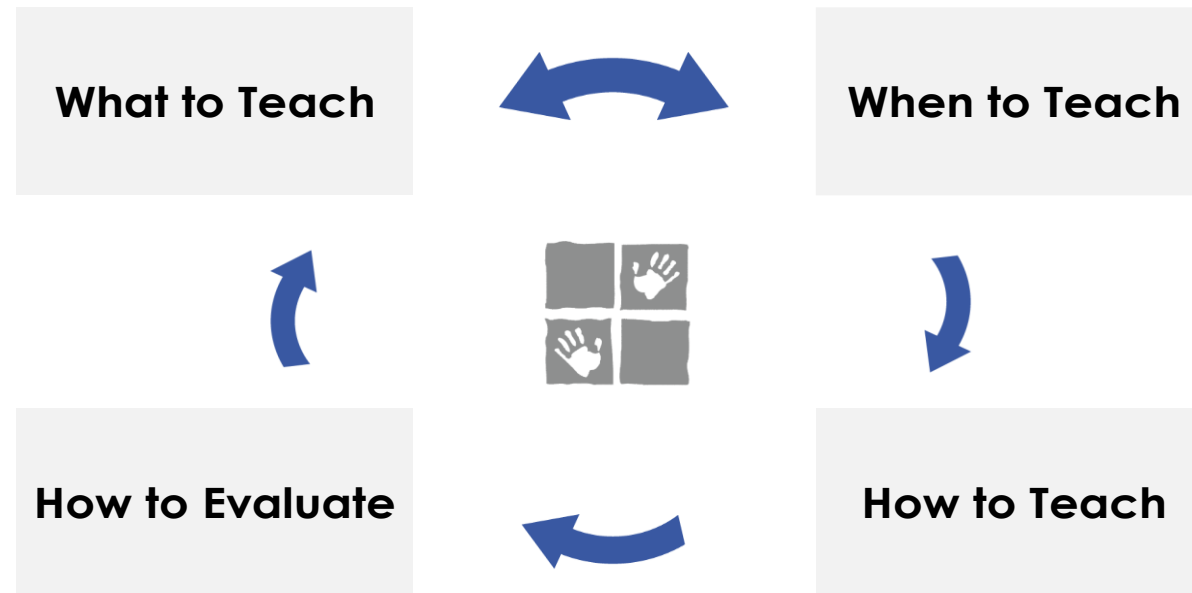
Embedded Frameworks

Historical and Contemporary Images

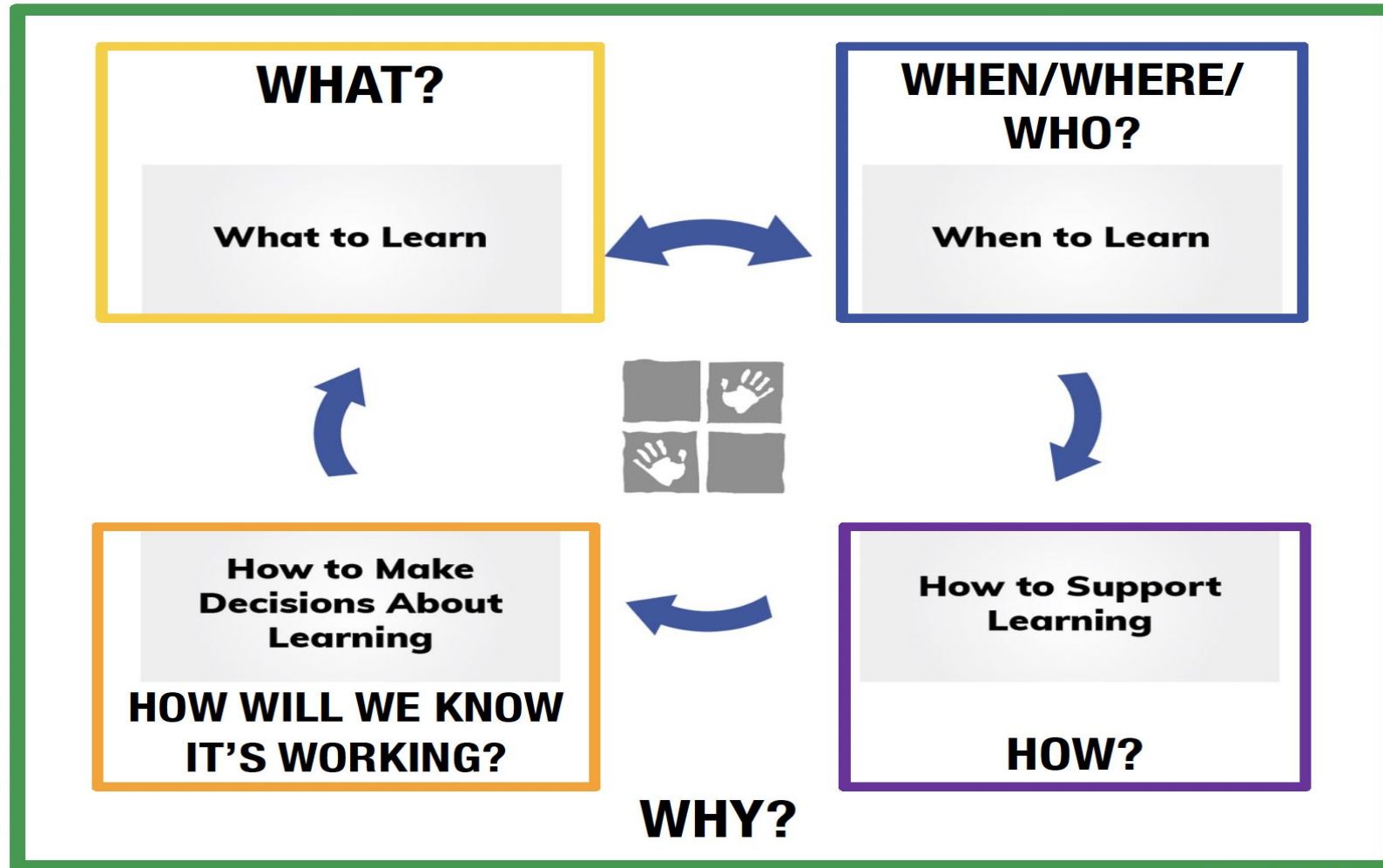
Initial Embedded Instruction for Early Learning Framework



Adapted Embedded Instruction for Early Learning Framework for Classroom Contexts

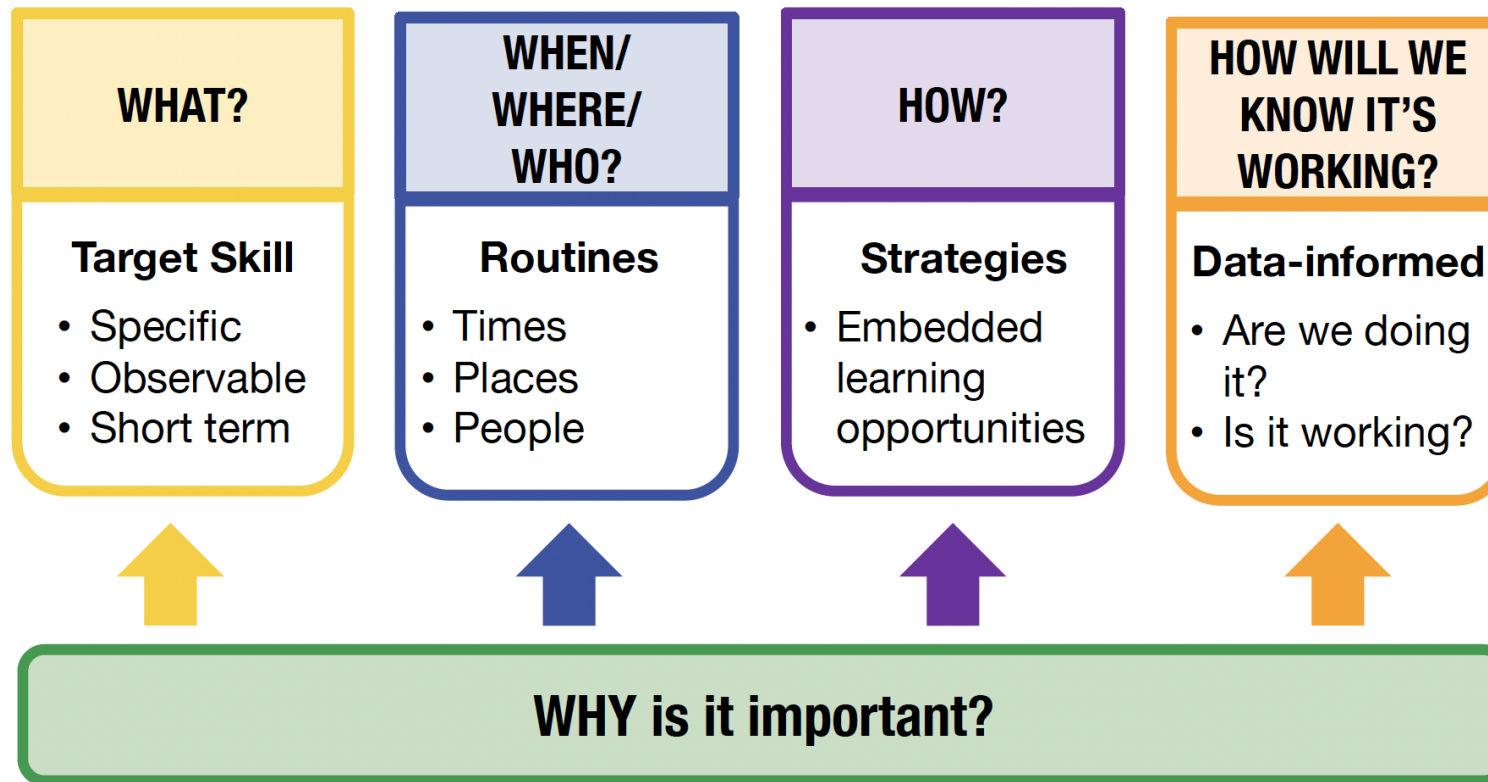


Adapted Framework for Classroom-Home Collaborations



Bishop, C. et al. (2020). *Embedded instruction for early learning: Tools for families.*

Adapted Framework for Early Intervention: Home and Community



(Snyder et al., 2018; Woods et al., 2018)

Embedded Practices

Adaptations to Practices: 14 Initial to 6 “Essentials” (see Handouts)

EIEL Framework Parts	EIEL Practices
What to Teach	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Develop and implement activities that support engagement and learning of all children. 2. Gather information about children’s skills in activities, routines, and environments (activity-focused assessment) and use it to help inform priority learning targets. 3. Break down larger goals to identify the target skill for child to learn in the next few weeks and ensure alignment with general preschool curricular content. 4. Write developmentally appropriate, functional, and aligned, generative, observable, and measurable priority learning targets.
When to Teach	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 5. Select which activities, routines, and transitions are natural, logical, or planned fits for embedded instruction given the priority learning target. 6. Plan which and how many instructional learning trials to embed within and across activities, routines, and transitions. 7. Develop and use an activity matrix to guide embedded learning opportunities for individual children’s target skills.
How to Teach	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 8. Use intentional and systematic instructional strategies to teach target skills and promote child engagement and learning. 9. Implement complete A-B-C embedded instruction learning trials that include (a) an environmental arrangement and/or prompt to elicit the priority learning target behavior (antecedent), (b) additional help to elicit the priority learning target behavior if the behavior does not occur, and (c) an appropriate response following the child behavior (consequence). 10. Implement massed, spaced, or distributed embedded learning trials, as appropriate for the child’s target skill. 11. Implement the frequency, intensity, and duration of instruction needed to address the child’s phase and pace of learning.
How to Evaluate	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 12. Use strategies to help evaluate fidelity of embedded instruction implementation (Am I doing it?). 13. Implement strategies to help decide if children are making progress on their priority learning targets (Is it working?). 14. Make data-based decisions about whether changes are needed to fidelity of embedded instruction implementation or child target skills or priority learning targets (Do I need to make changes?).

EIEL Framework Parts	“Essential” Embedded Learning Practices
What to Teach	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Identify and align target skills. 2. Write high-quality priority learning targets.
When to Teach	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3. Use high-quality activities to provide multiple, meaningful, motivating (M3) embedded learning opportunities. 4. Develop and use activity matrices to guide when, where, with whom, and how many learning opportunities are embedded within and across activities.
How to Teach	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 5. Implement embedded learning opportunities as complete A-B-C learning links (complete learning trials)
How to Evaluate	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 6. Collect and analyze data about implementation and child progress to inform instructional decisions.

Six “Essential” Embedded Learning Practices

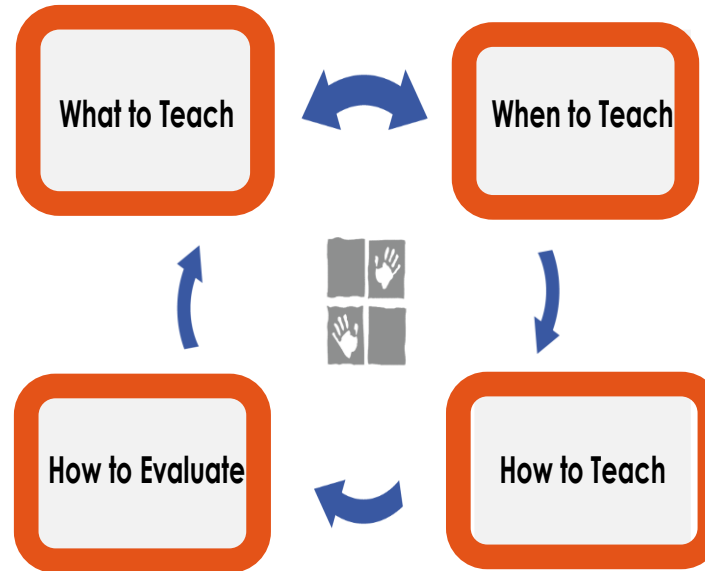
1. Identify and align target skills.

2. Write high-quality **priority learning targets**.

3. Use high-quality **activities** to provide **multiple, meaningful, motivating (M3)** embedded learning opportunities.

4. Develop and use **activity matrices** to guide when, where, with whom, and how many learning opportunities are embedded within and across activities.

6. Collect and analyze **data** about **implementation** and **child progress** to **inform instructional decisions**.

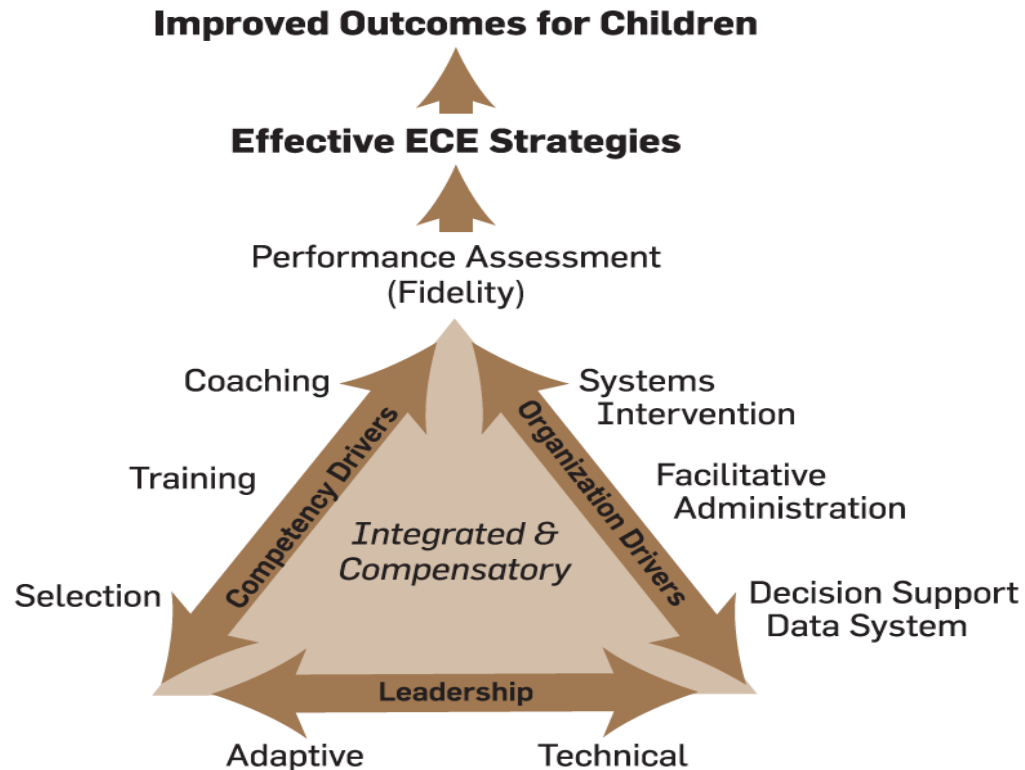


5. Implement embedded learning opportunities as **complete A-B-C learning links** (complete learning trials).

“Tools” to Support Implementation

Implementation “Drivers” and Strategies

Implementation Supports: “Tools” for Teachers, Providers, and Families



© Fixsen & Blase, 2008

Note: ECE = Early childhood education

Source: Reprinted with permission. Fixsen, D. L., & Blase, K. A. (2008). *Drivers framework*. Chapel Hill, NC: The National Implementation Research Network, Frank Porter Graham Child Development Institute, University of North Carolina.



Snyder, P. A., Hemmeter, M. L., & Fox, L. (Eds.). (2022). *Essentials of practice-based coaching: Supporting effective practices in early childhood*. Brookes.



Sharing Implementation
Stories and Experiences

References and Back-Home Resources

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- patriciasnyder@coe.ufl.edu
- T.W.McLaughlin@massey.ac.nz
- john.forster@noahsarkinc.org.au