The Indiana Department of Education’s Early Learning Guidance is a resource for educators and other early childhood professionals to support and enhance children’s learning and development while using the Foundations, Indiana’s Early Learning Development Framework (2015). While this is not an exhaustive list, this guidance serves as a suggestion for practice from birth to age five including the transition into kindergarten. The information can be used to support a child’s development at different levels of learning, and promotes fluid movement between developmental stages.

**Potential uses for the Early Learning Guidance:**

- **Educators Working with Children Birth to Five (in all settings)** can use the guidance to support their daily practice, intentional lesson planning, and high quality instruction.

- **Administrators and Leaders** can use this guidance to help support improvement of daily practice and quality in programs as well as identifying growth opportunities for staff. This can occur in tandem with goals established in their professional development plan.*

- **Professional Development Organizations** can use this guidance to help support the creation of training related to intentional lesson planning and high quality daily instruction in conjunction with the Foundations.

- **Technical Assistance Providers** can use the guidance as a training and supplemental resource tool to support educators, while coaching the creation of quality early learning lesson plans.

- **Higher Education Faculty and Administration** can use this as a resource on effective instructional strategies for students studying early childhood education in conjunction with the Foundations.

- **Families** can use this guidance to help support their child’s learning and growing outside of early education programs. Families are a child’s first and most important educator.

Examples of strategies educators can use to support dual language learners and exceptional learners*

**Family Engagement**

Encourage families to:

- Model talking about their day and share their thoughts.
- Ask their child about their day (e.g., "Tell me about your drawing/picture/art from school today!").
- Talk about the daily schedule or routines.
- Try making books a part of their daily routine (e.g., read a bedtime story together).
- Talk frequently with their children starting at birth.

**Special Populations**

Educators can:

- Use gestures and visual cues to aid in understanding the meaning of words.
- Reinforce and review vocabulary that has been taught or discussed.
- Speak with clarity and provide small amounts of information at a time to allow time for processing.
- Give opportunities for the child to repeat given directions to demonstrate understanding of verbal language.

*The Indiana Department of Education recognizes that many of these strategies are appropriate and beneficial to all children.*
How to Navigate the Powerful Practices Chart

**Powerful Practices**

Examples of ways adults can support young learners' receptive communication:

**ELA1.1: Demonstrates receptive communication**

A young child learns to communicate long before they speak. Creating an environment filled with rich language and vocabulary as well as opportunities to hear language gives the child the ability to listen and respond in various forms. Across all developmental stages, educators can:

- Recognize a child understands more language than they can express.
- Read a book many times.
- Talk and sing to children, using complex grammar and rich vocabulary when appropriate (e.g., introduce vocabulary as it relates to the environment, on walks, or field trips).
- Engage children in listening activities.
- Pose questions to determine understanding.
- Provide one-on-one, face-to-face verbal and non-verbal interactions to support engaging a child in communication.
- Offer opportunities to engage in two-way conversations with adults and peers.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Developmental Stage*</th>
<th>Infant</th>
<th>Younger Toddler</th>
<th>Older Toddler</th>
<th>Younger Preschool</th>
<th>Older Preschool</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Talk with infant during and about daily routines and prepare them for transitions (e.g., “I am going to wipe your nose now!”)</td>
<td>Talk with child during and about daily routines like meals, personal care, and read alouds (e.g., “It is time brush our teeth.” “Today, we are having green beans for lunch.”)</td>
<td>Talk with child during and about daily routines like meals, personal care, and read alouds (e.g., “Before we eat our snack, we will wash our hands.”)</td>
<td>Reinforce child’s vocabulary usage (e.g., Child: “There is a dog out there.” Adult: “You are right. There is a big, brown dog in our backyard.”)</td>
<td>Extend child’s vocabulary (e.g., highlight the similarities and differences between words while playing games and reading books)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Talk with infant, using their name often in the conversation (e.g., “Sarah, are you hungry?”)</td>
<td>Talk with child about what you or they are doing (e.g., “I’m helping Susie clean up the blocks.” “You are walking to the playground.”)</td>
<td>Engage in conversation using simple words, signs and/or gestures</td>
<td>Rephrase questions or requests if the child does not understand the first time</td>
<td>Play more complex listening games (e.g., Simon Says)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Verbally respond to infant’s vocalizations (e.g., “Respond to an infant by saying, “Is that so?” “You don’t say?”)</td>
<td>Engage in conversation using simple words, signs and/or gestures</td>
<td>Pose simple who, what and where questions and provide adequate time for a response (e.g., “Do you know who is visiting you today?” “What can we use to draw this picture?”)</td>
<td>Model “if then” statements (e.g., “If it is snowing, then we need gloves.”)</td>
<td>Provide new, different, varied and diverse experiences that expand vocabulary (e.g., field trips or objects to explore)</td>
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<td>Point to objects while talking about them</td>
<td>Match your facial expressions to the tone of the child’s voice</td>
<td>Give one-step directions (e.g., “Time to go outside! Let’s get our coats.” or “It’s time to pick up all the cars!”)</td>
<td>Give simple two step directions (e.g., “Find your crayon box and take it to the table.”)</td>
<td>Give multi-step directions, providing support and/or reminders to assist the child with completion of the task</td>
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<tr>
<td>Repeat familiar words and gestures that accompany your actions (i.e., play-by-play announcing to their actions and yours)</td>
<td>Provide and read aloud books with predictable and repeated language</td>
<td>“E.g.” provides an example of what this strategy could look like in daily practice</td>
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<td>Change tone of voice when reading aloud to show emotion</td>
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</table>

*Ages have been intentionally not listed within the Early Learning Guidance. The Indiana Department of Education recognizes and is sensitive to the fact that children have a wide range of skills, abilities, strengths, and areas for growth; therefore, educators are encouraged to move fluidly through the columns to meet a child’s individual needs.*