



## Presenter Notes

### Purpose:

The purpose of this module is to provide trainers and participants with information about **Embedded Learning Opportunities for Infants and Toddlers**. Other common terms that refer to this practice include "activity-based intervention," "naturalistic instruction," and "incidental teaching." This training module provides examples and suggestions for using embedded learning opportunities (ELOs) in inclusive home-based, family child care, and center-based early care and education settings.

### Materials Needed:

- *Embedded Learning Opportunities for Infants and Toddlers* Presentation Slides (21)
- Presenter Notes
- Projector and audio equipment
- Learning Activity
  - *Noticing Opportunities: Facilitator Notes*
  - *Child Vignettes*
  - *Embedded Learning Opportunities-at-a-Glance*
- *Helpful Resources*
- Flip chart, or similar, and markers for writing participant ideas during group discussions

### Before You Begin

- This training module supports education staff to use embedded learning opportunities to support infants and toddlers with disabilities or suspected delays.
- This training module is one in a series of in-service modules about planning and providing individualized interventions for infants and toddlers who need extra support.
- The presentation slides are animated. Animations throughout the presentation highlight various aspects of embedded learning opportunities. It is advised that trainers spend a few minutes prior to the presentation to run through the presentation and consider how they will match it to the presenter notes.
- The included learning activities offer participants opportunities to think about and plan for embedded learning opportunities in their own settings.

## Presenter Notes

### Slide 1: Embedded Learning Opportunities for Infants and Toddlers

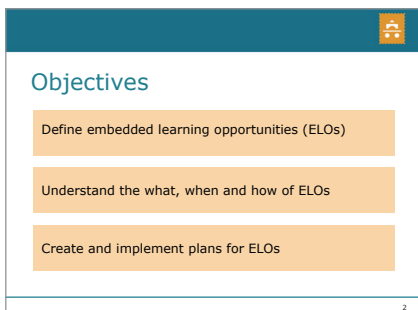


**Note to Presenter:** These slides may be used as a training session focused on infants and toddlers. Selected slides may also be used to supplement the in-service suites found on ECLKC (Embedded Teaching and Learning: The Teaching Loop, and Break it Down: Turning Goals into Everyday Teaching Opportunities) or to supplement the preschool module on the Head Start Center for Inclusion website (Embedded Learning Opportunities). This module may be combined with other modules for infants and toddlers (Curriculum Modifications, Routines-Based Planning and Activity Matrix for Infants and Toddlers) to provide a professional development sequence on assessment and intervention for infants and toddlers with disabilities.

Introductions:

- Introduce yourself
- Have participants introduce themselves e.g., briefly describe their experiences with infants and toddlers, include experiences with young children with disabilities or other special needs.

The purpose of these presentation materials is to help participants understand the benefits and uses of embedded learning opportunities for infants and toddlers especially those with disabilities or other special needs.

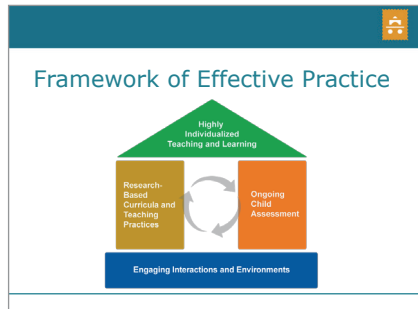


### Slide 2: Objectives

Participants will be able to:

- Define embedded learning opportunities and tell some of the benefits of the approach
- Understand and describe the what, when, and how of implementing embedded learning opportunities
- Create and implement plans for embedded learning opportunities

Recognize that much growth, development and learning happens during the period of infancy and toddlerhood. For young children with disabilities and other special needs, we need to intervene early and intentionally. One way to do this is through the use of intervention practices that provide opportunities for children to learn and practice developmentally and socially meaningful skills within the context of everyday activities.



### Slide 3: Framework of Effective Practice

**Note to Presenter:** This is an animated slide. Also, the graphic representation of the House is used to visually represent the framework for effective teaching practices. The practices and level of support we call Embedded Learning Opportunities is depicted visually in the Roof of the House.

The Framework for Effective Practice portrays effective teacher and home visitor practices to support development and learning and school readiness for all children including infants and toddlers.

The Roof represents highly individualized teaching and learning. Notice the tiers or levels of support all resting on the foundation of engaging interactions and environments.

The tiers show increasing specificity and intensity of support. Embedded learning opportunities are used with some children who need more than modifications or adaptations. Some children need additional learning opportunities to acquire and use individual learning objectives.

**Case Studies**

- **PJ** – Home-Based Setting
  - 9 months old
- **Hani** – Family Child Care – 18 months old
- **Santino** – Child Care Center – 2 ½ year old

### Slide 4: Case Studies

Ask participants to think about three young children with disabilities – PJ, Hani, and Santino. See *Noticing Opportunities: Part 1*.

Ask participants to think about and jot down the typical activities and routines that each child participates in – PJ at home with his family, Hani in a small, mixed-age family child care program, and Santino in a center-based classroom of 9 other two- and three-year old children.

**Case Studies**

- **PJ** – Home-Based Setting
  - 9 months old
  - Learning Objective: will turn his head when his name is called
- **Hani** – Family Child Care
  - 18 months old
  - Learning Objective: will bring spoon with textured food to mouth and eat
- **Santino** – Child Care Center
  - 2 ½ year old
  - Learning Objective: will take turns with peers during play times

### Slide 5: Case Studies

This slide shows one individual learning objective for each child. Ask participants to think about the times of the day and the activities and routines where they might provide teaching to help the child learn this skill.

**Note to Presenter:** Organize this activity in a way that makes sense for your group. Participants may work individually or in pairs. They may select one or all of the children. Ask participants to share their ideas with others.

Points to make during the discussion:

- Participants already have ideas about and, perhaps some experience with embedded learning opportunities
- Children are learning throughout the day and in all sorts of activities and routines

- “Teachers” can include family members, other caregivers, and educators
- Sometimes it can be difficult to provide enough practice opportunities and sometimes challenging behavior can interfere.

Embedded Learning Opportunities

**Definition**

- ✓ Short, planned interactions that provide opportunities for learning priority learning objectives
- ✓ Occur within ongoing activities, routines and transitions

**DEC Recommended Practice**

- ✓ INS5: Practitioners embed instruction within and across routines, activities, and environments to provide contextually relevant learning opportunities.

6

### Slide 6: Embedded Learning Opportunities

Embedded Learning Opportunities (ELOs) is an educational practice that involves short, planned interactions, sometimes called teaching loops, that provide opportunities for learning priority learning objectives. These short interactions are planned so that they occur within ongoing activities, routines and transitions at home, in group settings, and out in the community.

Embedded Learning Opportunities are evidence-based educational practices and appear as instruction practice #5 in the Division for Early Childhood (DEC) Recommended Practices.

The practice states “Practitioners embed instruction within and across routines, activities, and environments to provide contextually relevant learning opportunities.” This practice can be used by families to support children’s goals and development at home. Early childhood professionals can share and support families to use ELO strategies during routines and activities at home.

For more about DEC Recommended Practices see the website <https://www.dec-sp.ed.org/dec-recommended-practices>

For a review of the evidence supporting the practice see Snyder et al., 2015 (complete citation is on the Helpful Resources handout).

Benefits of Embedded Learning Opportunities

Take advantage of existing routines and authentic activities

Maximize motivation by following the child’s interests

Highlight functional skills

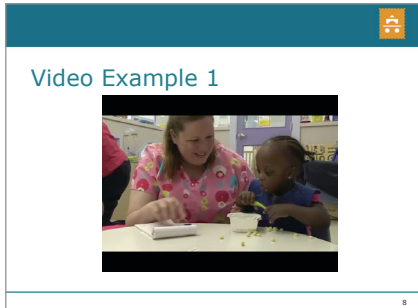
Enhance generalization

7

### Slide 7: Benefits of Embedded Learning Opportunities

There are a number of potential benefits of using ELO.

First, the practice takes advantage of existing routines and authentic activities. Children learn and practice new skills within everyday situations. In using ELO, teachers or family members build on the child’s interest and what captures the child’s attention. Thus, the practice maximizes motivation. Further, use of typical routines and activities means that the skills being taught are likely to be useful (functional) and socially meaningful. All of these features enhance generalization or use of the new skill in natural environments.



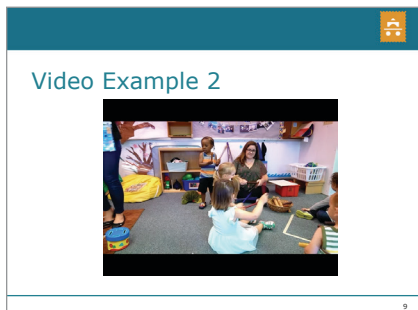
### Slide 8: Video Example 1

The next two video clips show examples of planning and using ELOs.

In this example, the child’s objective is to use a spoon to scoop and eat. The teacher uses conversational cues such as “*want cereal*” or “*grab your spoon*.” The child tries to scoop, and the teacher adds gentle physical assistance (prompt) to help her. The teacher uses praise and acknowledgment to complete each teaching interaction. Of course, getting to eat the cereal is the natural consequence.

Mealtime and snack time are obvious times to embed learning opportunities for scooping with a spoon.

If the child’s objective was to use a variety of simple tools or utensils with greater control, then the possibilities for learning opportunities expand. Ask the participants for examples such as using scoops or spoons in a sensory table or mixing bowl.



### Slide 9: Video Example 2

In this example, we see that the teacher embedded a child’s individual learning objective into a planned activity for a small group of children.

The objective is to imitate simple actions. The teacher planned an activity involving musical instruments such as rhythm sticks. The teacher uses cues such as “*follow me*” or “*he’s rubbing his sticks*.” She waits for the children to imitate and provides additional assistance to the child who needs it. She follows with praise and acknowledgment.

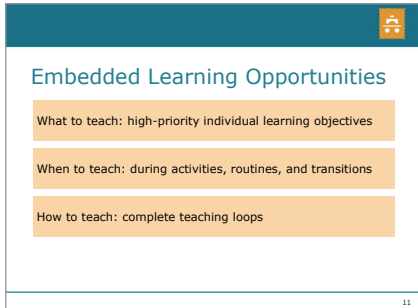
This example demonstrates how educators, family members, and other caregivers sometimes need to create additional learning opportunities so that a child gets plenty of practice. Also, note that both video clips showed how repeated opportunities to learn and practice were provided.



### Slide 10: Embedded Learning Opportunities

Planning is essential in order to use embedded learning opportunities effectively.

Educators and home visitors consider what to teach, when to teach, and how to teach.



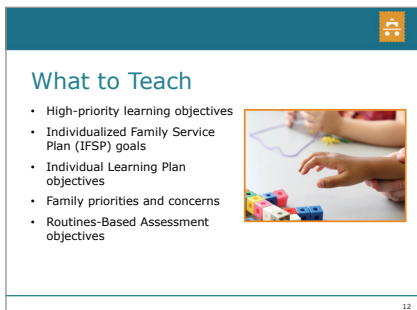
### Slide 11: Embedded Learning Opportunities

“What to teach” refers to the infant or toddler’s individual, high-priority learning objectives.

“When to teach” refers to the typical activities, routines, and transitions that make up the child’s day whether at home, in a group learning setting, or out in the community.

“How to teach” refers to the planned teaching methods used to provide complete teaching loops or interactions that provide the child with intentional learning opportunities.

Refer participants to their responses to the learning activity with PJ, Hani and Santino. That activity introduced the ideas of what to teach, when to teach, and how to teach.



### Slide 12: What to Teach

There are a number of sources that educators and home visitors use to identify what to teach for an individual child, in collaboration with the child’s family. This slide lists the major sources.

As a crucial part of their child’s support team, families frequently help to identify high-priority learning objectives when they share their priorities and concerns for their child.

Priority learning objectives are those skills and concepts that the child needs to learn. For children with disabilities, these may appear as outcomes on the child and family’s Individualized Family Service Plan (IFSP).

Other children may not be eligible for IDEA services, and do not have an IFSP, but they may have another Individual Learning or Behavior Support Plan.

One way to systematically identify priority learning objectives is through a Routines-Based Assessment. This is a process of “walking through” the child’s day to identify possible needs and concerns with participation in typical activities, routines and transitions. See the Routines-Based Assessment and Planning module on the Head Start Center for Inclusion website for more information.



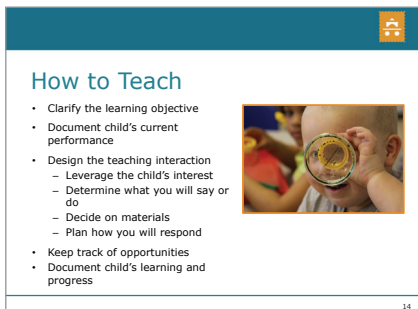
### Slide 13: When to Teach

ELOs takes advantage of typical activities (e.g., story time, block play), routines (e.g., diapering, feeding, bathing), and transitions (e.g., going outside, clean-up from play time). Planned teaching loops or teaching interactions are inserted.

This requires that the educator thinks about the child’s individual objective and support needs, and then identify the activities, routines and transitions that offer opportunities for the child to learn and practice the skill or concept.

It is like a puzzle. The educator also needs to consider the child’s current abilities and preferences, and the demands of the activity (such as the number of other children, their needs, and other adults who may be present).

**Note to Presenter:** Refer to the *Child Vignettes* handout and Part 1 of the learning activity described in *Noticing Opportunities: Facilitator Notes*. Have participants discuss some of the considerations for planning when to embed teaching and learning opportunities.



### Slide 14: How to Teach

For ELOs to be effective, there are a number of planning steps.

Clarify the learning objective. Sometimes, it is too big and needs to be broken down into smaller achievable steps. See the module **Break it Down: Turning Goals into Everyday Teaching Opportunities** on ECLKC for more information.

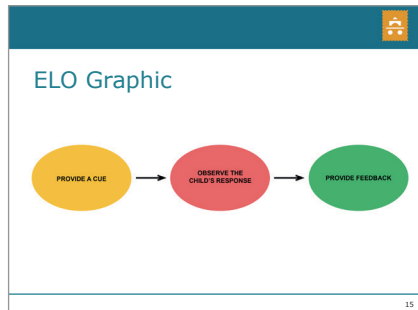
Include the criterion in the learning objective. It might be something like “most of the time” or it might be quantified more precisely like “on 90% of the opportunities” or “at least 5 times each day”.

Then, document the child’s current level of performance so you can track the child’s progress.

Design the teaching interaction or teaching loop. Write this down using the *Embedded Learning Opportunities-at-a-Glance* form. Write what you (or other caregiver, parent, or educator) will say or do to elicit the target skill or concept. Include any materials needed. Then, write down how you (or other caregiver, parent, or educator) will respond to the child.

Keep track of the opportunities provided. Once is not enough. Provide lots of opportunities everyday.

Periodically, check to find out if the child has achieved the objective (i.e., the child is performing at the criterion stated). When the child has accomplished the objective, celebrate, and move on to other important skills and concepts.



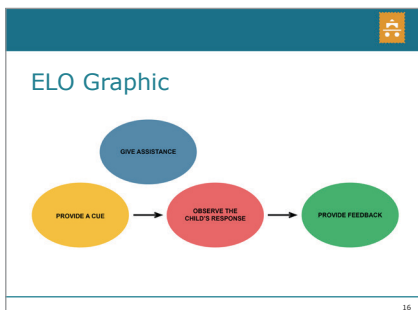
### Slide 15: ELO Graphic

This slide provides another illustration of the teaching interaction or teaching loop.

The cue is what you say or do. The cue is meant to elicit the child’s response.

The child’s response is the skill or concept – the “what.”

Feedback is what an educator, family member, or other caregiver does after the child’s response. It can be a smile, continuation of the exchange, a natural answer. If the child does not quite produce the planned response, the adult can demonstrate the planned response.



### Slide 16: ELO Graphic

Sometimes, we add a prompt to provide the child with more help to do the skill/ concept. This might be physical assistance, a model, or a gesture.

**Note to Presenter:** Provide participants with examples of the teaching interaction or teaching loop. For example:

*Adult: Holds out a car and a book. Says “Hani, do you want the car or the book?”*

*Hani: Points at book and says “buh.”*

*Adult: Says, “The book. Here you go.” And hands the book to Hani.*

If Hani has difficulty making a choice, the adult might add a prompt such as holding the book closer to Hani.

### Slide 17: Embedded Learning Opportunities-at-a-Glance

The *Embedded Learning Opportunities-at-a-Glance* form can be used to plan the teaching interaction or teaching loop. The educator, family member, or other caregiver keeps this available during the day so that they can easily refer to it and deliver the ELO as planned.

This form also has a place at the bottom to record notes.

**Note to Presenter:** Refer to the form on the slide and give participants the blank *Embedded Learning Opportunities-at-a-Glance* form they will use for the *Noticing Opportunities: Part 2*. Walk through the Hani example from the previous slide.

Given a choice of two objects and asked what she wants, Hani will point and vocalize to request the desired object and will do this at least 80% of the time.



Have participants practice with at least one more example using the *Noticing Opportunities: Activity 2*.

### ELOs and the Activity Matrix

| HANI        | Bring spoon to mouth and eat | Tap 2-3 word phrases | Put smaller object in container | Take 2-3 steps |
|-------------|------------------------------|----------------------|---------------------------------|----------------|
| Arrive      |                              | "Tap"                |                                 |                |
| Crate       |                              | "Tap"                |                                 | Practice       |
| Exploration |                              | Practice             | Practice                        |                |
| Snack       | Practice                     | "more"               | "all done"                      |                |
| Outside     |                              |                      |                                 | Practice       |
| Lunch       | Practice                     | "more"               | "all done"                      |                |
| Nap         |                              | "up"                 |                                 |                |
| Snack       | Practice                     | "more"               | "all done"                      |                |
| Play        |                              | Practice             | Practice                        | Practice       |
| Departure   |                              | "all done"           | "bye bye"                       | Practice       |
| Diapering   |                              | "up"                 | Practice                        |                |

### Slide 18: ELO and the Activity Matrix

The Activity Matrix is used to:

- organize the learning opportunities,
- to disperse learning opportunities across a variety of activities, routines and transitions,
- to make sure that the child gets sufficient learning opportunities

This matrix is for Hani, who is enrolled in a family child care program. Refer to the Activity Matrix module for more information.

### Case Study: Monitor Progress

| Area      | Parent Objective                                |
|-----------|---|
| Feeding   | Bring spoon with textured food to mouth and eat |
| Feeding   |   |
| Middling  | Say 3-5 meaningful word approximations          |
| Middling  |   |
| Diapering | Put smaller toy/object in container             |
| Time      |   |
| Time      |   |
| Time      |   |

### Slide 19: Case Study: Monitor Progress

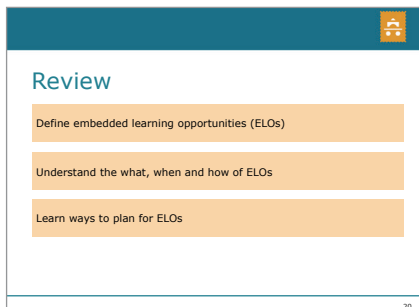
ELOs are used for a child's high priority learning objectives. Monitor the child's progress toward accomplishing objectives by periodically collecting data on the child's performance. Educators in group and home visiting settings can collect data by:

- writing regular notes
- collecting work samples, taking photos or video as appropriate
- observing and counting the child's performance
- asking families to jot down notes, about or take a photo of, their child's activities at home
- talking to families about what their children do at home related to their goals

Use a data collection method that works for the setting, making sure to collect data regularly. Many early care and education programs already have systems for collecting regular information on feeding, diapering, and sleeping. Incorporate data collection on individual learning objectives within these systems.

This example shows how data are collected at Hani's family child care program.

Ask participants to suggest methods for monitoring progress and collecting data for PJ and Santino. Refer to the children's individual learning objectives to obtain more specific yet feasible suggestions.



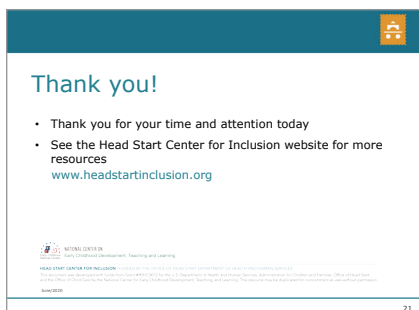
### Slide 20: Review

Ask participants to write down their definition or description of embedded learning opportunities.

Ask participants to write down the what, when, and how of embedded learning opportunities.

Ask participants to write down one way they will use the information from this module in their work or practicum setting.

Clarify any remaining question or comments.



### Slide 21: Thank You!

Thank audience members for their time and participation before ending the session. Recommend that they visit the Head Start Center for Inclusion website for more helpful resources: [www.headstartinclusion.org](http://www.headstartinclusion.org)