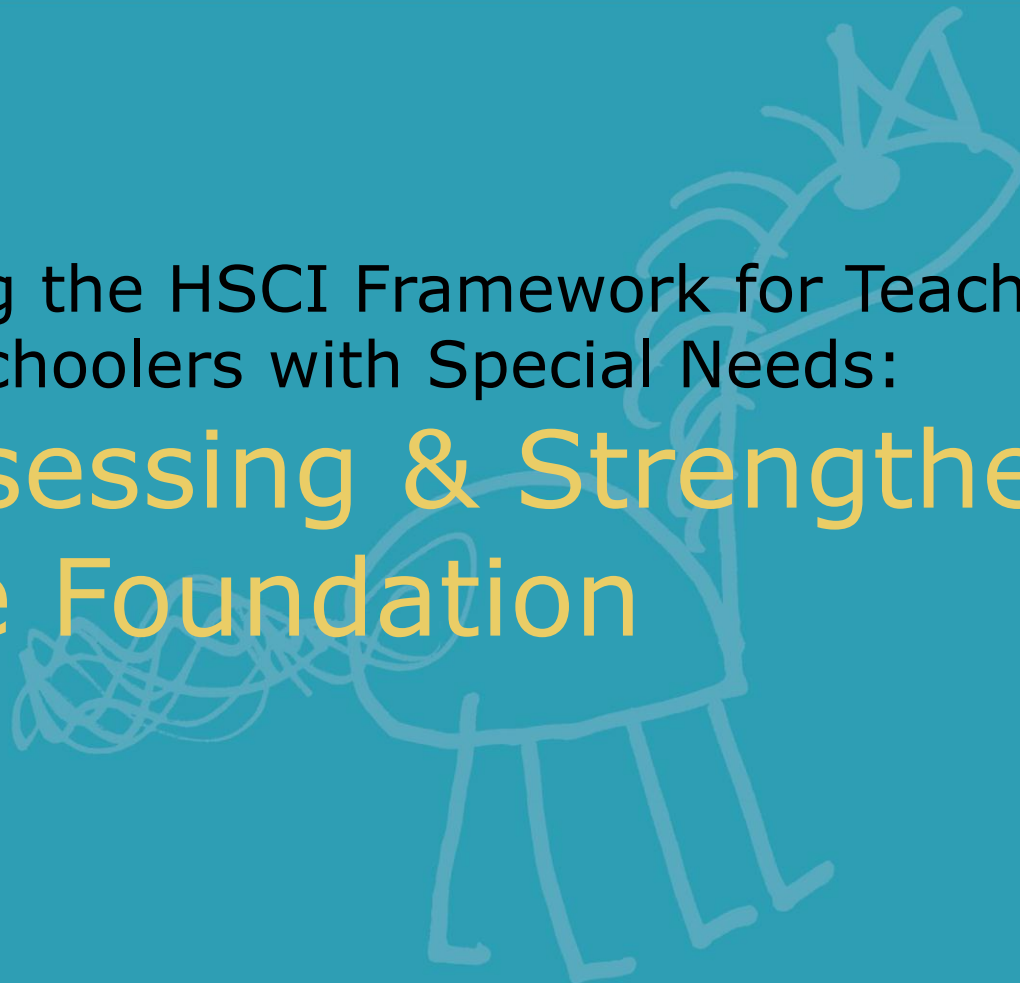




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Using the HSCI Framework for Teaching Preschoolers with Special Needs: Assessing & Strengthening the Foundation



Head Start Center for Inclusion Funded by the Office of Head Start Department of Health and Human Services

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Today's Objectives...

- Learn about the HSCI Framework for teaching preschoolers with special needs
- Identify and describe the foundational block of the framework
- Learn practical strategies to increase social inclusion — or membership — of children with special needs



The HSCI Framework provides a set of educational practices designed to help Head Start teachers do a more effective job of including young children with disabilities and other special needs in their preschool classrooms.





Supplements Curriculum

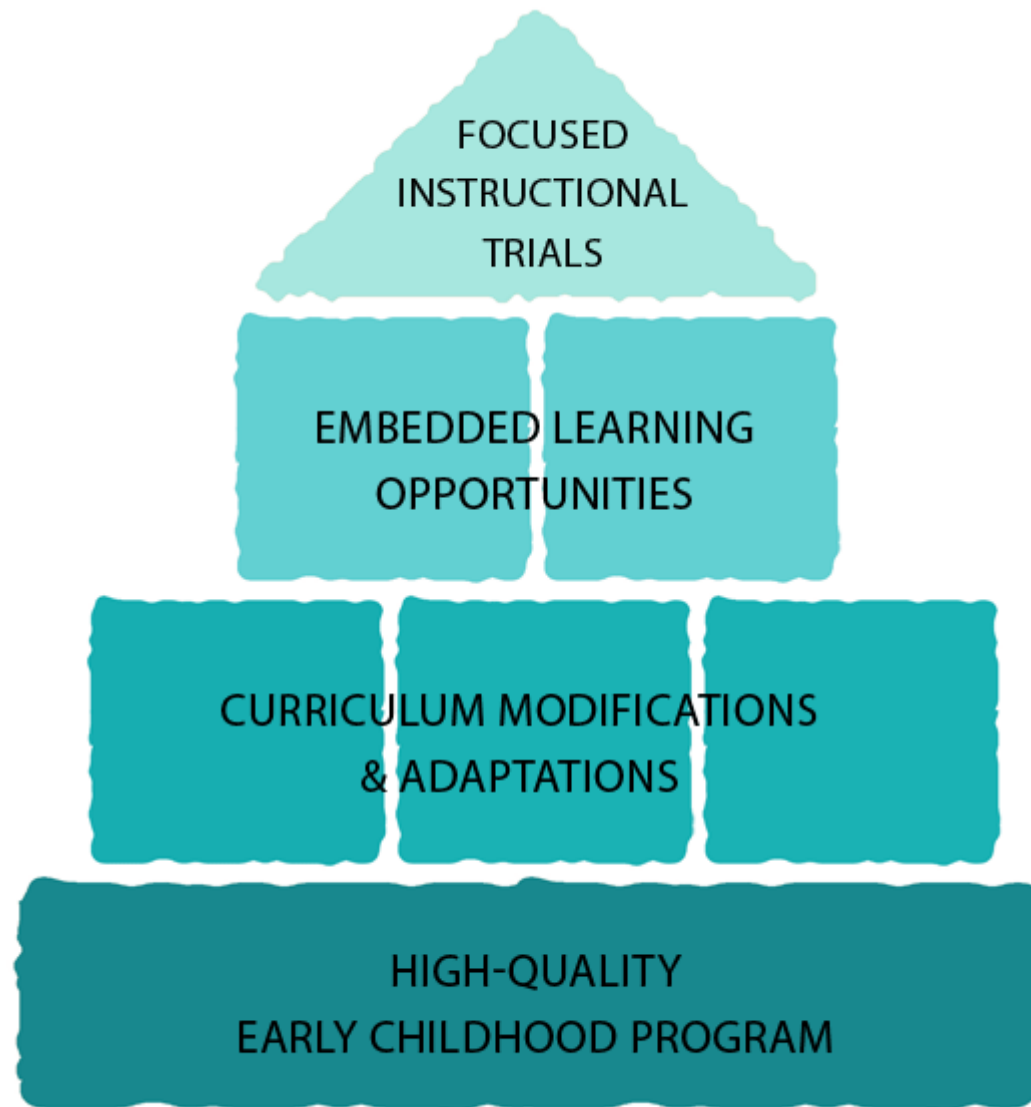
These practices can be used to supplement the curriculum the teacher currently uses.

- Creative Curriculum
- High/Scope
- Project Approach



Helping Children Thrive

Using the HSCI Framework can help **all** children participate, learn, and thrive in their preschool classrooms.





The Foundation

**HIGH-QUALITY
EARLY CHILDHOOD PROGRAM**



A Strong Foundation

- Quality classroom indicators
- Classroom arrangement, schedules, transitions and staff Zoning
- Social membership



Quality Classroom Assessment

1. Do children spend most of their time playing and working with materials or with other children?
2. Do children have access to various activities throughout the day?
3. Do teachers work with individual children, small groups, and the whole group at different times during the day?
4. Is the classroom decorated with children's original artwork, their own writing, and stories they've dictated?



Quality Classroom Assessment (continued)

5. Do children learn within meaningful (i.e., relevant to their interests and experiences) contexts?
6. Do children work on projects and have extended periods of time to play and explore?
7. Do children have an opportunity to play outside everyday?
8. Do teachers read books to children individually or in small groups throughout the day?
9. Is the curriculum adapted for those who are ahead as well as those who need additional help?
10. Do the children and their families feel safe and secure within their early childhood program?



Activity

Using the Classroom Quality Indicators Checklist, read, discuss and determine what is in place and what may need some attention or tuning up in your classroom.



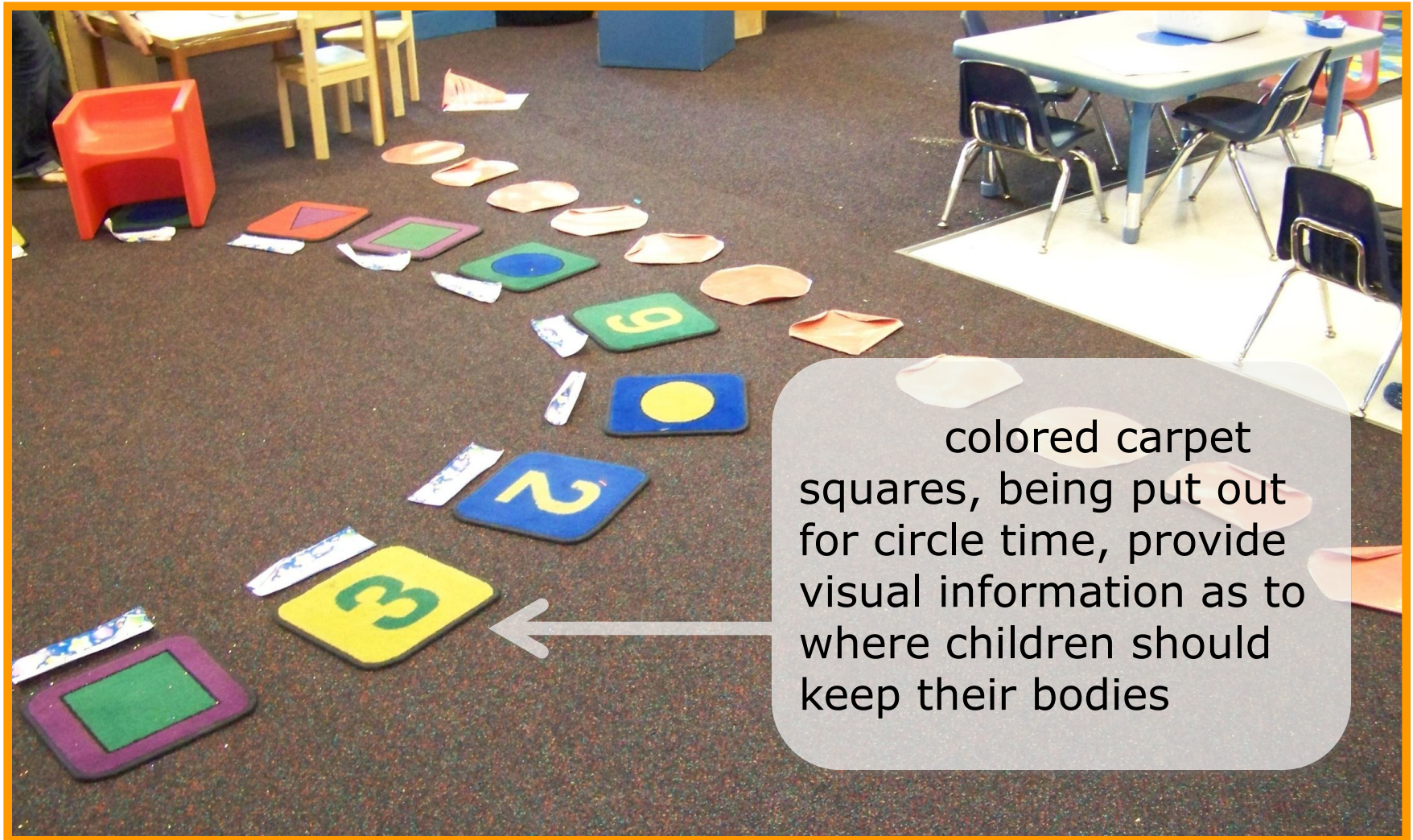
Classroom Quality — more things to consider

- Classroom arrangement
- Schedule
- Transitions
- Staff scheduling/Zoning
- Membership



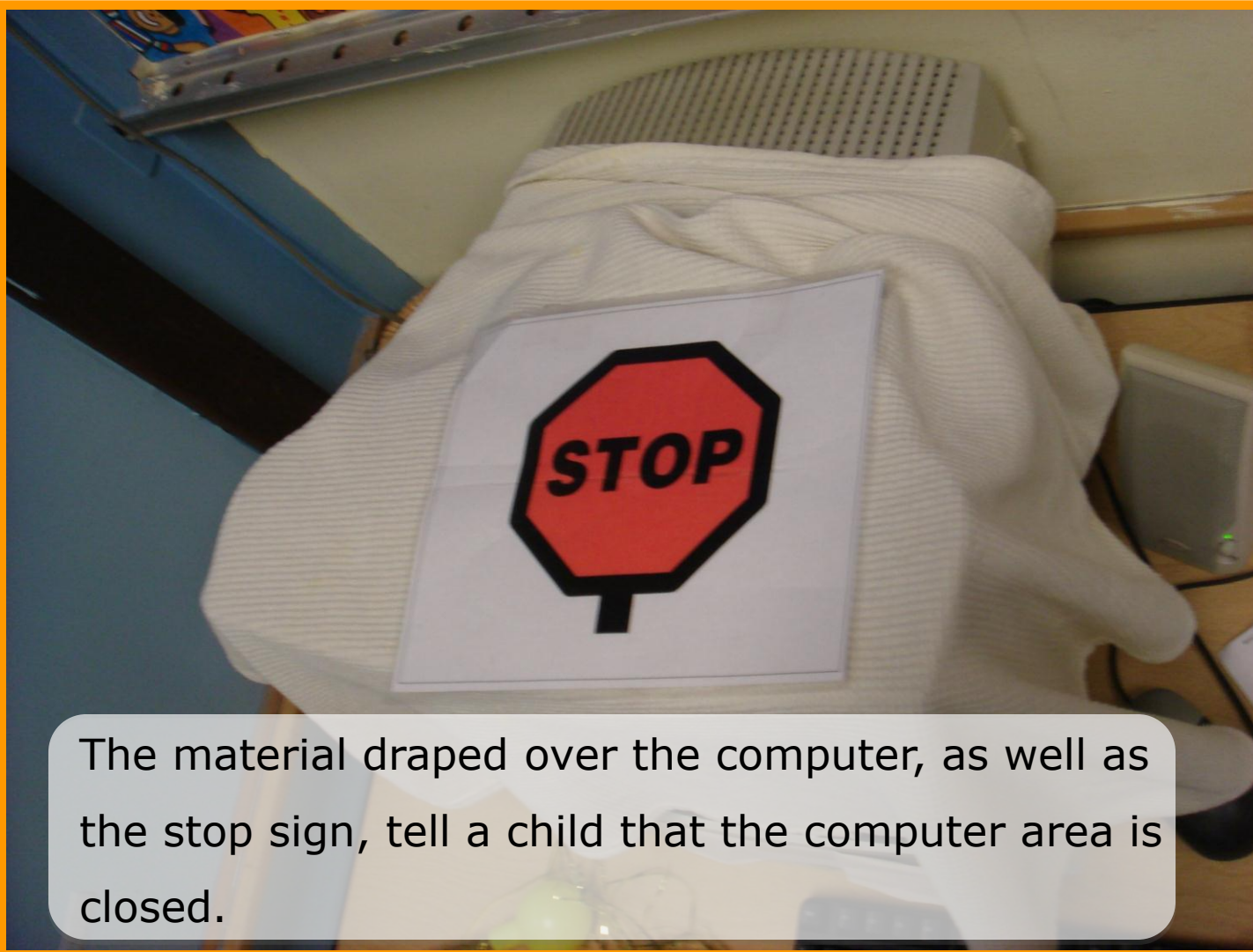
Classroom Arrangement

- Classroom is designed with a variety of areas with easily viewed boundaries
- Avoid wide open spaces
- Materials are organized and in good working order – before children arrive
- Visual reminders of expected behavior

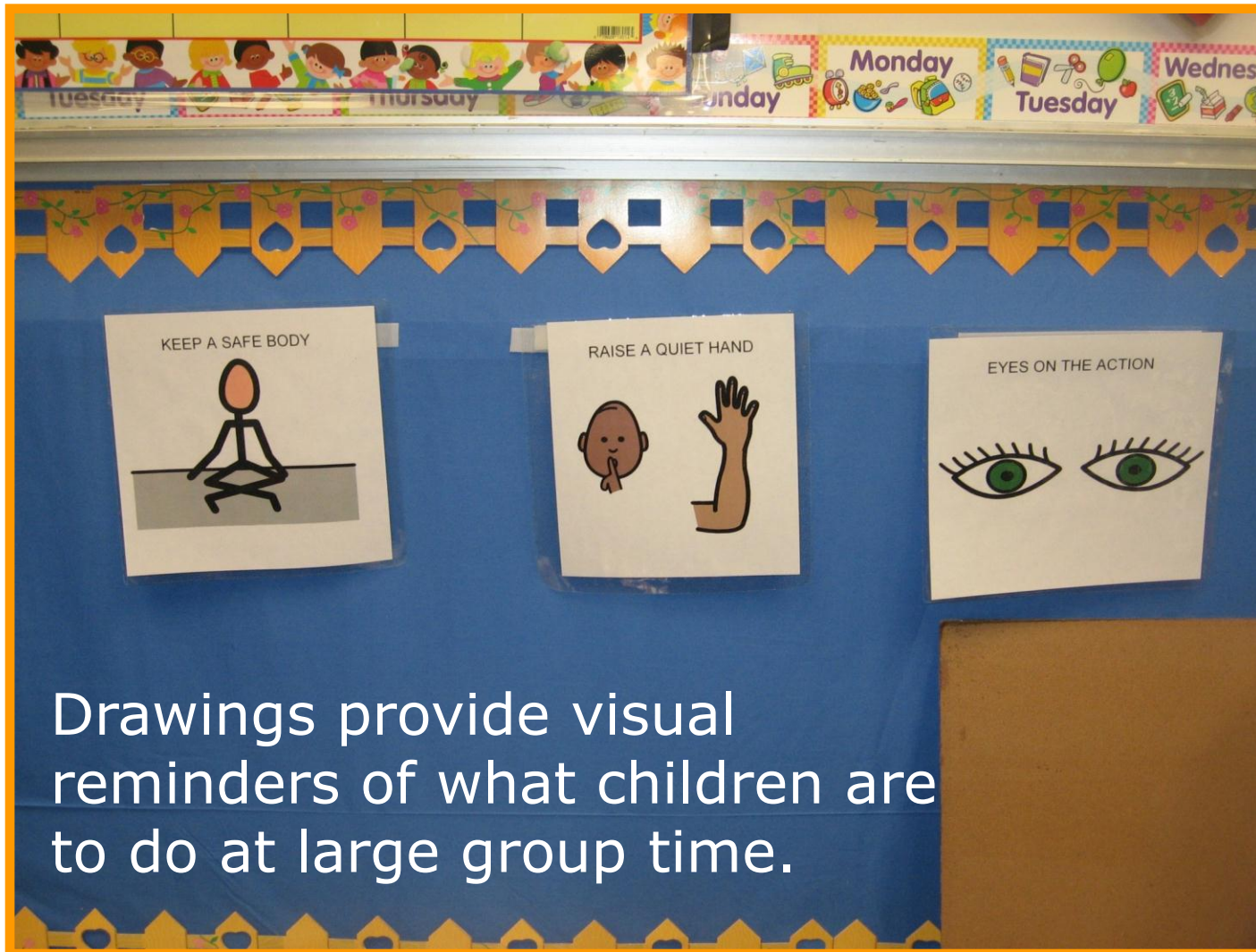




A stop sign provides a visual reminder that the area or activity is currently not available



The material draped over the computer, as well as the stop sign, tell a child that the computer area is closed.



Drawings provide visual reminders of what children are to do at large group time.

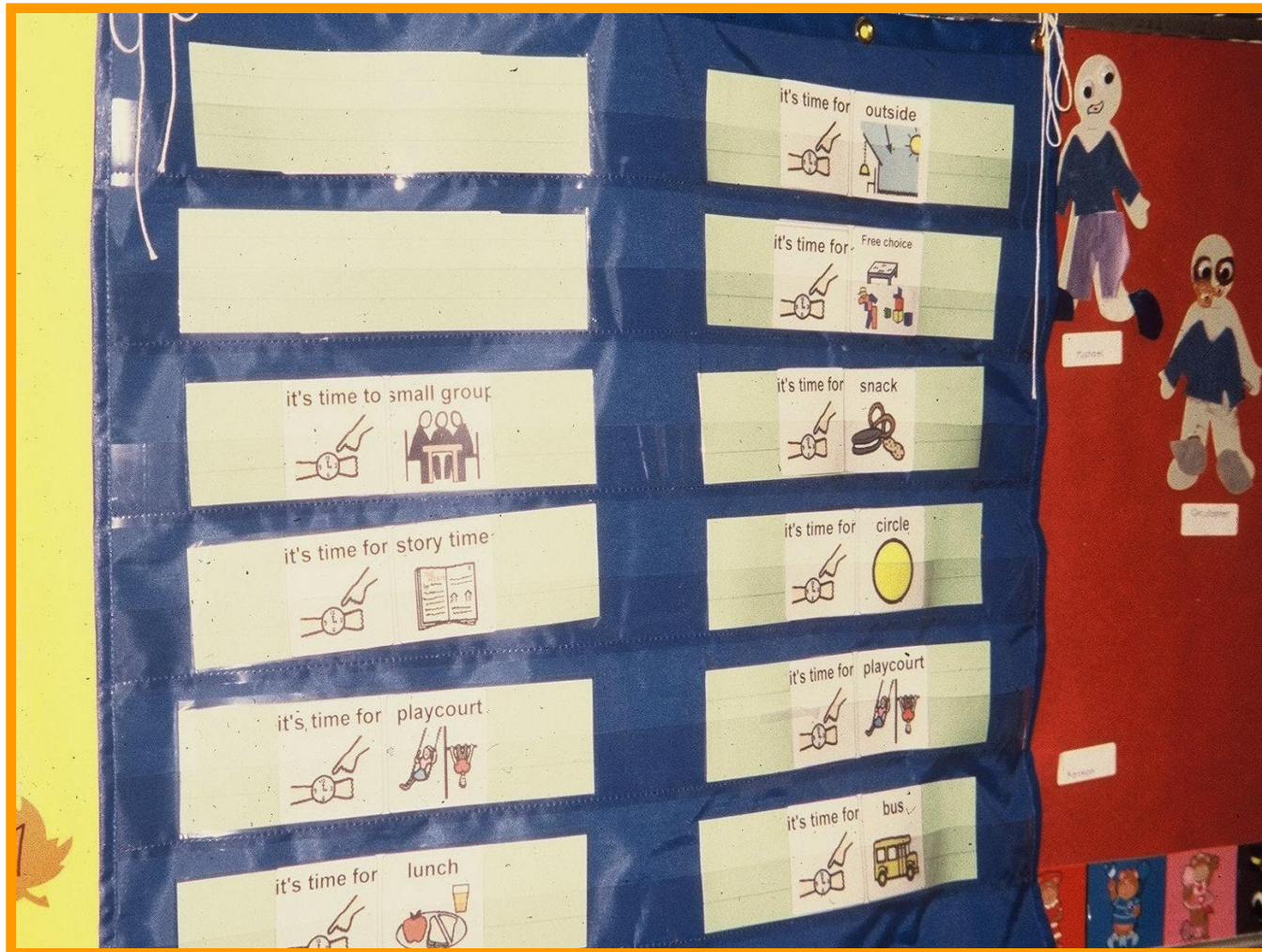


Pictures on the door provide reminders of expected behavior in the hallway.



Schedule

- Consistent and predictable schedule is available in a developmentally appropriate way
- Alternate active and vigorous activities with less active experiences
- Routines within routines



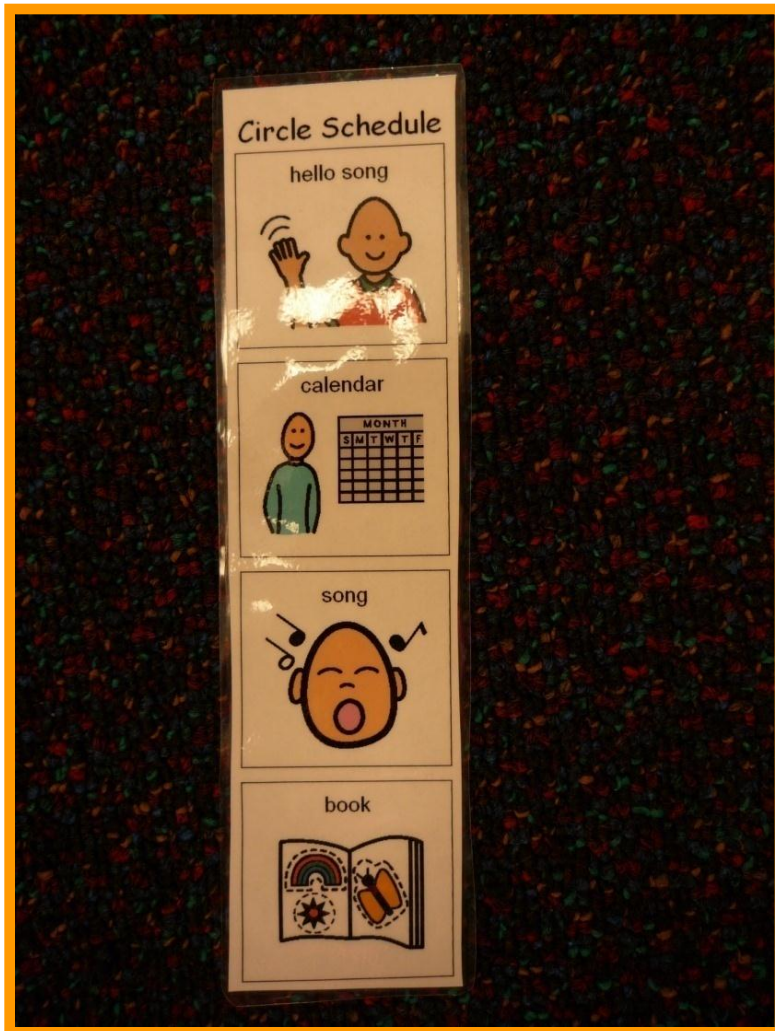


Routines within Routines

Create a rhythm to the routine by having the same activities happen in the same order

For example, during circle time

- Sing hello song
- Look at the job chart
- Read a book
- Music and movement activity
- Choose learning centers



Routine within
a routine for
circle time



Transitions

- Eliminate unnecessary transitions and wait time
- Teach the expectations during transition time
- Use pictures and other consistent and salient cues
- Provide choices



Eliminate Unnecessary Transitions and Wait Time

Is the transition necessary?

Is the “whole group” transition necessary?

- Or, can children transition in small groups or individually (e.g., bathrooms, hand washing, etc)?

To eliminate wait time

- Begin when just a few children are ready with a motivating activity (e.g., blow bubbles, musical instruments, etc)
- Plan activities that children can get started on their own



Transitions



Teacher uses motivating activity to help bring children over to the line



Activity: Teach the Expectations during Transition Time

- Using the Planning for Transitions worksheet, list the daily schedule of the classroom
- Describe the expected behaviors for children for each transition.
- Describe what adults should do during transitions.
- Discuss when and how you will teach the transition

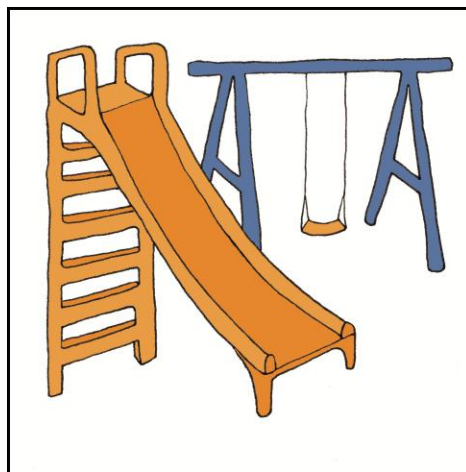


Use Pictures and Other Consistent and Salient Cues

- Use a consistent cue that signals a change (e.g., bell, drum, song)
- Show children pictures of where they will go next (e.g., transition cue cards)



Transition Cue Cards



See the headstartinclusion.org website for more transition cue cards.



Provide Choices

Provide children with choices about how to complete the transition

For example:

- Do you want to sit by the window or the behind the bus driver?
- Do you want to use the blue or the red crayon to write your name?
- Do you want to clean up the unit blocks or the farm animals?



Staff Zoning

- Zoning is a technique used to organize classroom staff
- Each staff member is assigned a role
- Zoning can be used throughout the whole day, not just for free choice time
- Zoning helps staff know exactly what their duties are at all times of the day



Why use Zoning?

- Zoning can increase staff efficiency
- Staff zoning can help to eliminate non-engagement behaviors
- Zoning helps build confidence in preschool staff
- Zoning can be used with as few as 2 staff members



Types of Zoning

- Zone: Each staff member is responsible for a separate section or “zone” of the classroom.
- One-to-One: Staff members are responsible for staying near or “zoning” with a child who has more significant challenges.



How to use Zoning in the Classroom

- Break down each activity into various duties
- Specify the teacher zones at the beginning of the week on the staff schedule
- Make sure everyone understands their roles and zones
- Post the staff schedule in a visible location in the classroom

Staff Schedule

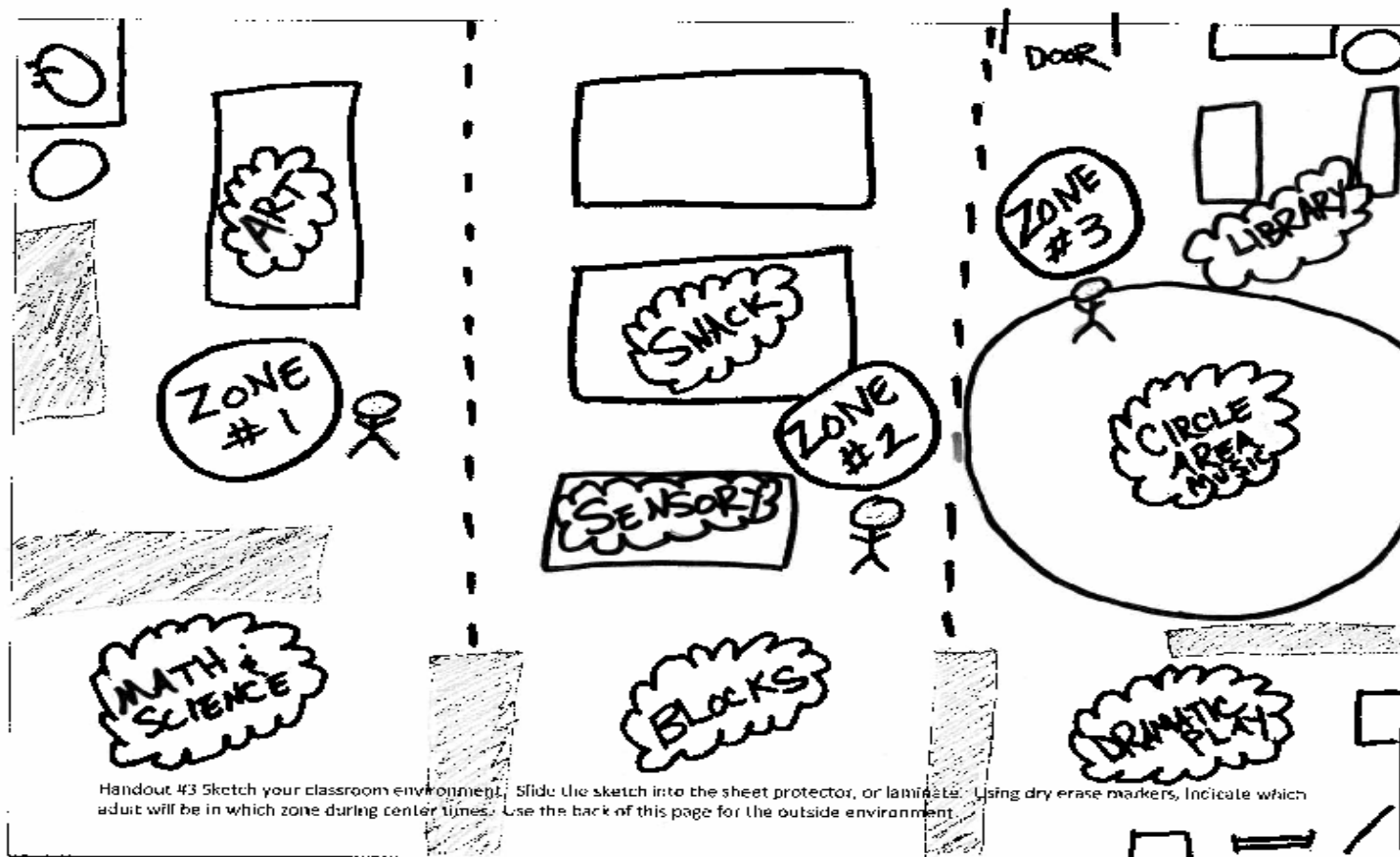
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Activities/ Transitions	Staff Person A	Staff Person B	Staff Person C
Arrival	Greet children and parents	Help children put away backpacks	At tables getting ready for Small group
Small Group	At red table	At blue table	At green table
Transition to outside	Signals transition/blow bubbles	Clean up small group tables	Help children to transition
Outside	Big toy	Field	Sanitize tables for snack
Transition to classroom	Help children transition	Signals transition	Hand washing
Snack	At red table	At blue table	At green table



Staff map for “zone” model





Activity

- Create a staff schedule for your classroom
- Then create a classroom map with zones for both inside and outside time



Social Membership

- Membership is a key feature and a goal of true inclusion.
- Membership encompasses such terms as belonging, acceptance, and positive relationships with other members of the classroom community.
- Being a member of the class is when the child is described as “just one of the kids”



Social Membership

- Membership is important for all children.
- For children with disabilities and other special needs, the process of becoming a member of the class may serve as the foundation for positive peer relationships and development of friendships.



Activity

- Complete the teacher's guide to determine children's experiences in your classroom
- Is every child a **member** of the class?

teacher(s): _____ classroom: _____ date: _____

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inclusion

teachers guide: membership

Assessing and Strengthening the Foundation Module

Teachers:
Use this checklist to guide your classroom inclusion practices. These indicators will help you think about and plan for ways to promote membership in your classroom. Answer the questions from the perspective of a child with special needs.

QUESTION	OR CLAR BROW	IF NO, WHAT IS THE PLAN?
Do I have a cubby or place to put my coat and backpack just like my classmates?	yes no	
Do I have a seat at circle that includes all the items my classmates have like a carpet square and name tag?	yes no	
Do I have a classroom job just as my classmates?	yes no	
Do I get to take a turn during group activities?	yes no	
Do I have the opportunity to participate in "messy" activities when a table, even though I may be a little messier than others?	yes no	
During regular activities am I in a similar position to my classmates (i.e. my classmates are standing-I am standing, etc.)?	yes no	
Can I physically get to all the activities in the classroom (reach into the sensory table, get toys from shelves)?	yes no	
Is there something I know how to use and can use independently in each learning center?	yes no	
Do I have the opportunity to sometimes be in the front and middle of the line during transitions?	yes no	
Am I usually participating in the same or similar activities as my classmates (though they might be adapted)?	yes no	
Do I have the chance to be the "helper" on occasion?	yes no	
Am I an active participant in classroom activities (not just an observer)?	yes no	
Do my teachers and classmates talk to me, ask me questions, play with me?	yes no	
Do I have friends in my class?	yes no	

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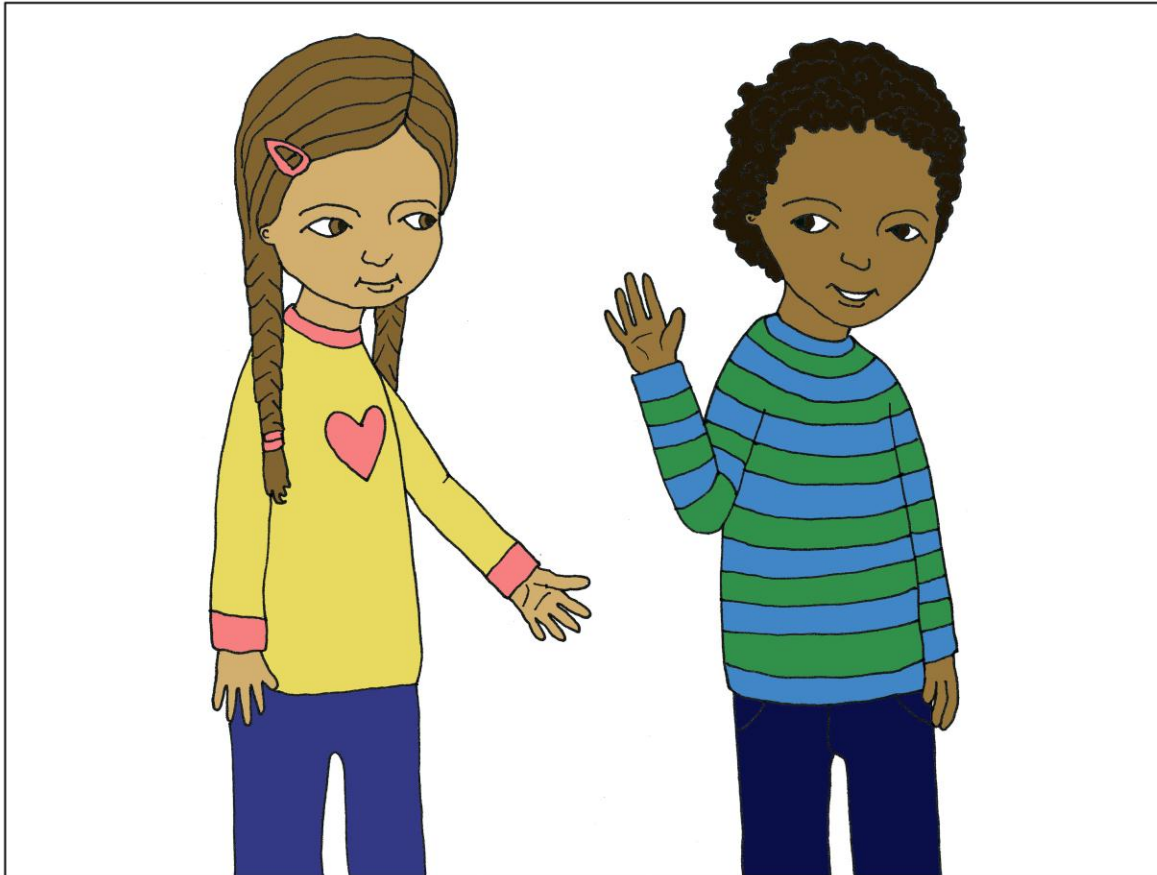


Strategies for Increasing Social Membership

- Assign children to groups or tables that are consistent over time
- Design activities in the classroom that require and support multiple participants (e.g., group art projects, games)
- Encourage children to help each other
- Make sure there is something everyone can do independently
- Teach children key friendship skills

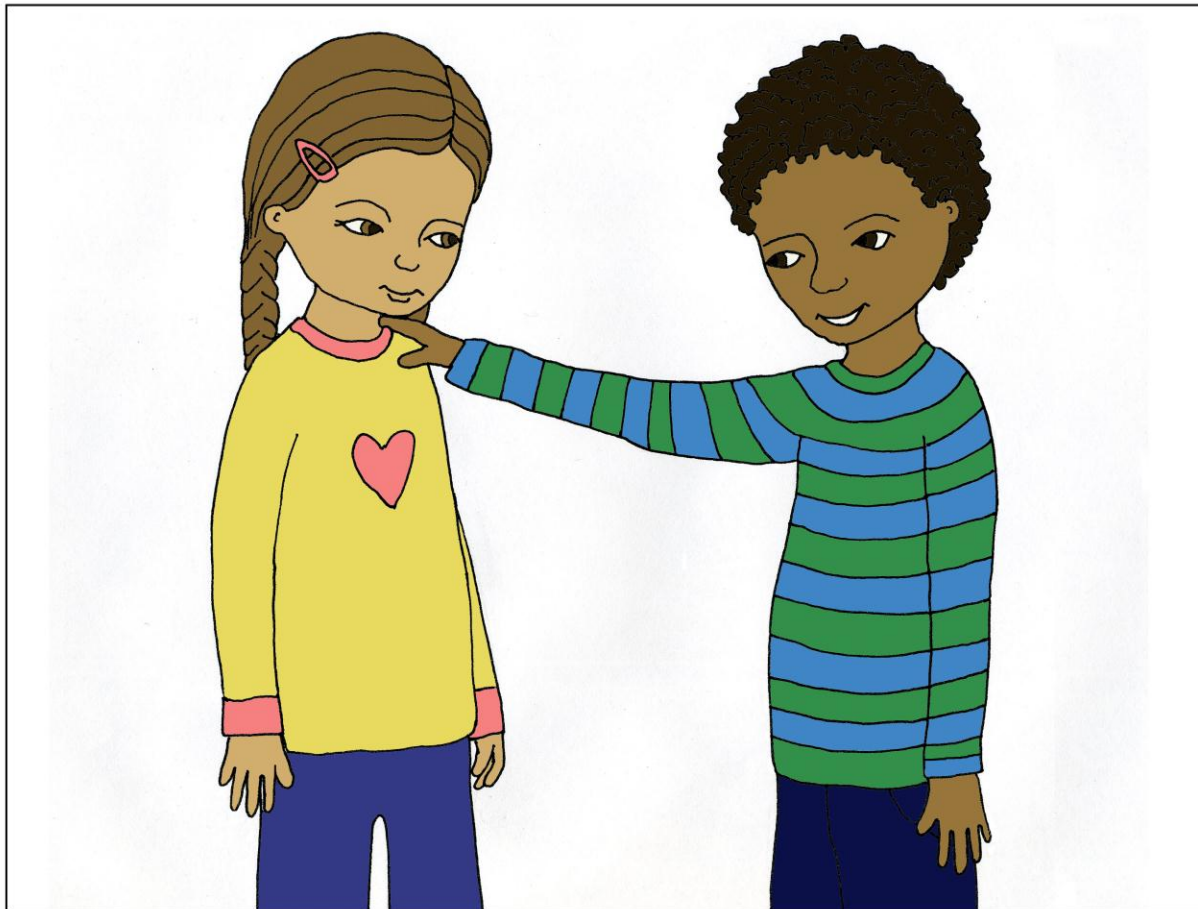


Ask a Friend to Play



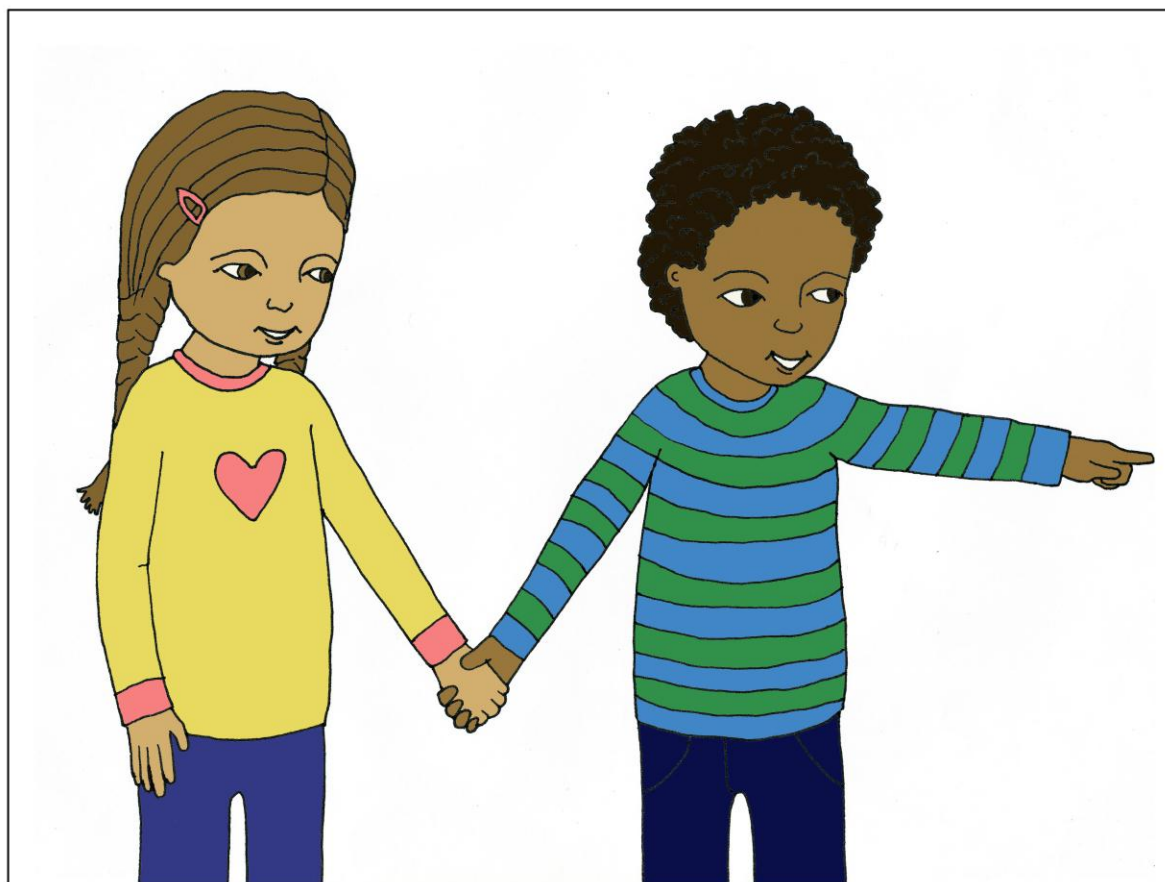


Get a Friend's Attention





Gently Take a Friend By the Hand





Share a Toy





Review

- The HSCI Framework consists of four levels of support for a child: quality classroom environment, curriculum modifications and adaptations, embedded learning opportunities and child focused instruction

The “foundation” includes:

- Quality classroom indicators
- Classroom arrangement, schedules and transitions
- Social membership



Thank you!

- Thank you for your time and attention today
- Please take a moment to complete the session evaluation and turn it in to your instructor.
- See the Head Start Center for Inclusion website for more resources

www.headstartinclusion.org