



Beyond Bubbles and Blocks:

Tips for MA EI Home Visitors



Did you know?

The following is a story we recently heard from a parent and thought it might help providers reflect on some of the concepts you have been learning and practicing related to PIWI.

“Having a child in EI is not easy. Currently my third child is receiving EI services due to a motor delay. With my first two children our everyday life was busy, getting breakfast on the table, walking the dog, getting out the door for work... We never had to do anything extra they just learned and thrived from being loved and included in our family life. For my third child this is not the case. As a parent this is hard to comprehend and understand. Are we not doing enough for her? How can I do more than I am already doing?

Recently, my EI specialist suggested that I get a ride in car for outside so that my daughter could play in the yard with her brother and sister. It was a simple suggestion and I went right out to buy the toy. When she first went out and played, she was able to see the other kids, work her muscles, and give the kids high fives as they rode by on their bikes. They were laughing and screaming with happiness. It was a great suggestion and it really changed the way that she is involved outside. As I watched her play, I realized that this situation was making me angry, and I began to doubt my ability to meet my daughter’s needs... How could I as her mother not have thought of this? How did I not know that this was something we could do that would help her? We had considered buying the same toy for my other kids.”

The PIWI triadic strategies are a range of options that help us to decide the best way to intervene with parents so that we are best supporting their relationship with their child. As we know, ‘suggest’ is a more directive strategy and may be necessary to use in home visits. In this scenario, there is opportunity to engage the parent in the problem solving to better reinforce her confidence and competence in her relationship with her daughter using other strategies. Consider the impact of using a less directive strategy like affirming this mom’s competence or focusing her attention on what she sees happening when her kids are outside.

1. Affirm Parenting Competence: ‘It’s great that you get her out there with them so and that you noticed that in the stroller she couldn’t play and be as involved’
2. Providing Developmental Information: ‘She seems to enjoy being outside but is ready to begin to play outside’
3. Focus Attention: ‘What do you think she wants to do next or would enjoy while playing out there?’

Using PIWI helps us to consider what strategies are most appropriate for the parent that we are working with and allows us to reflect on how these strategies support confidence, competence and mutual enjoyment between the parent and child.

Evaluation/ Assessment tip



Has your program started to use the new IFSP?

If so... I am sure you have noticed how vital it is to begin planning for services with functional assessment. We must learn about families’ routines, and what their concerns and priorities are so that high quality outcomes can be identified.

When collecting functional assessment information don’t forget...

- Interview families both formally and informally
- Use your active listening skills
- Take time to observe without making interpretations
- Check your own bias
- Continue to do all these things throughout the IFSP process