**Early Years – Developing Quality First Interactions**

These strategies can be used as a checklist for practitioners to reflect on their practice and focus on building quality first interactions with all children.

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| **Strategies to support quality first interactions with each child** |
| **Let the child choose the toy or activity**  Provide motivational activities/resources linked to the child’s interests  **Follow the child’s lead**  This takes advantage of what the child is currently interested in and attending to.  You can then capitalise on the child’s current focus of attention.  This includes allowing your child the freedom to play with toys in ways that are often  different from your original intention!  **Sitting where the child can see your face**  Think…opposite/height/level/listening space  We don’t always have to be at our child’s eye level but when we do it allows  for a better connection with our children.  **Waiting/Watching/ Offer silence**  We need to be sure to *listen with our eyes*, meaning we need to watch our children closely  for their communication cues (nonverbal) and take the focus off the words.  **Avoid questions as an initial interaction – make a comment instead**  Asking too many questions tend to shut down communication, rather than promote it.  **Be responsive**  *Be* [*truly present*](http://www.playingwithwords365.com/2013/06/how-to-help-your-child-talk-slow-down-and-be-present/) *in the moment*  *Staying connected with your child allows them to lead the interaction*  *The practitioner may:*   |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | |  | **Copy or mirror the child’s actions or words**  **Listen to what the child is saying**  **Name what is in their hand**  **Repeat and expand the child’s utterance**  **Offer praise/reinforcement** |  | |

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| **Strategies to support quality first interactions with each child** |
| **Remember….**   * Respond promptly (within a few seconds of a child doing or saying something). * Respond positively in a way that shows the child you are *really interested* in what   she/he is saying.   * Stick with what the child is “talking” about and interested in – do not try to direct their attention to something else when she/he is already focused on something or someone. |