

PARTNERSHIPS WITH AND FOR LEARNERS

2

Let's return to the seven big ideas for effective teaching, learning, and development in early childhood introduced in the last module (p. 21). Each of the big ideas relies on establishing partnerships with learners, families, and fellow educators.

In fact, the following four big ideas include specific language about partnerships:

- ▶ Early childhood educators **and** their learners **work together** as evaluators of learning growth for all.
- ▶ Early childhood educators **and** learners have high expectations for learning that communicate equity of access and opportunity to the highest level of learning possible.
- ▶ **Trust is established** with all learners so that errors and mistakes are viewed as opportunities for new learning.
- ▶ Early childhood educators **continually seek feedback** about their impact on all their children's learning.

Big Ideas

Partnerships are a central component of early childhood. We form partnerships to create inclusive, anti-racist, anti-bias learning settings, where every child and every family is welcomed and included. We do not do this work alone; we must partner with learners, families, and fellow educators. In this module, we continue our reflection of *who before do* by valuing those we partner with in order to create effective learning contexts for every learner.



LEARNING INTENTION AND SUCCESS CRITERIA FOR MODULE 2

Before you engage with the learning in this module, read what we intend to learn (LI, the learning intention) and what it'll look and sound like when we've learned this (SC, the success criteria). Next, read the levels, descriptions, and images of the path to mastery (the rubric). Evaluate where you are right now for each success criteria. At the end of the module, we'll return to this self-evaluation and document the ways we've intentionally grown our teaching practice over time.

LI: We are learning the importance of partnering with our learners, their families, and our fellow educators, so that we can create inclusive, anti-racist, anti-bias learning spaces where educators and learners work together, trust is established, and feedback is valued.

SC: I'll know I've learned this when I can



Icon source: [istock.com/rambo182](https://www.istock.com/rambo182)

- Explain why partnerships with our learners, their families, and fellow educators are central to effective, inclusive, anti-racist, and anti-bias teaching, learning, and development in early childhood.

- Describe what partnerships that are inclusive, anti-racist, and anti-bias look and sound like.

- Identify and implement ways to build these partnerships that are inclusive, anti-racist, and anti-bias.

- Make connections among the big ideas for effective teaching, learning, and development in early childhood, these partnerships, and the characteristics of Visible Early Childhood Learners.

So how do we create these partnerships? And what should they look like and sound like? We begin by reflecting on partnerships with our learners.

PARTNERSHIPS WITH LEARNERS

Our work throughout this Playbook centers around partnering with learners to develop Visible Early Childhood Learners. This is central to the big ideas for effective teaching, learning, and development in early childhood. Throughout this Playbook, we will examine ways to partner with learners to communicate clarity, implement tasks and learning strategies, evaluate learning, make decisions about next steps, and give and seek feedback. But to begin, in this module, we will focus on an important first step: knowing our learners.

Partnering with infants, toddlers, preschoolers, and primary schoolers begins with knowing each learner well. We get to know learners by spending time with each one and discovering: *What are their ways of communicating, noticing, wondering, and interacting? What sparks their excitement as well as other emotions? What is familiar and unfamiliar to them?* Knowing learners means

we notice and value who each learner is and we believe each learner is already ready to meaningfully join and contribute to the learning community.

LEARNING ABOUT LEARNERS PROTOCOL

As early childhood educators, we should set aside time to get to know our learners. Getting to know our learners will ensure we see each child's value and we capitalize on their strengths so they contribute to the learning community. The *Learning About Learners Protocol* gives us the opportunity to spend time with learners, to observe learners as they engage with their peers and interact in the learning environment, and to document our noticings so they become actionable. The information generated from this structure will provide the foundation for our partnerships with both families and colleagues.

Here is the *Learning About Learners Protocol*:

- ▶ **Get to know all learners.** Intentionally spend time playing and working with each learner. Observe each learner and notice who they are. Remember, this protocol is designed to help us grow in our understanding of our learners, not to formally assess them. You do not need to spend time with every learner on the same day or for the same amount of time. Decide on a process that works for you and your colleagues and incorporate the process into your week.
- ▶ **Notice how, what, and who.** Essentially, the *Learning About Learners Protocol* asks us to gather information about how the learner is communicating, what they are doing, and who they are working with during the day. This includes looking at specific artifacts that learners create. Furthermore, this should include transitions and experiences outside of the classroom (e.g., outdoor play, snack and meals).
- ▶ **Be intentional and open.** While we want to know what children know, understand, and can do, the power of this protocol comes from the information gathered about who learners are, the processes they go through during their learning journeys, and the ways they interact and make sense of the world around them. By paying attention to how young children learn, we gather information needed to include each of them. Observing with these questions in mind may help you be intentional while remaining open to children's in-the-moment decisions, language, and actions:
 - *What are learners doing to make meaning of concepts and skills?*
 - *How do learners make meaning of the learning environment?*
 - *How do learners interact with other members of the classroom community?*
 - *What are learners gravitating toward? What is a popular material or choice and why?*

- *Who typically works or plays in this space? Do all children eventually work or play here?*
 - *Do learners engage in a balance of independent and collaborative work or play?*
 - *Do learners work or play for a sustained time period in one area or on one task?*
- ▶ **Communicate your genuine wonder and your desire to understand and know each learner.** As you spend time playing with, working with, and noticing each child, the actions and words you choose should convey your genuine interest in who they are and in creating space for them to bring their whole selves into the learning context. Remember to be quiet and just listen. Taking the time to actively listen communicates that you value the child.
- ▶ **Stay.** Rather than moving from child to child and space to space, stay in one area with one learner or one group of children. The depth and breadth of children’s thinking is often revealed over time as they engage more deeply in a task.
- ▶ **Keep a record.** Recording our interactions, noticings, and observations makes them visible and therefore actionable. We suggest the following template to organize your noticings:

Do not copy, post, or distribute



TEMPLATES

Learning About Learners Protocol

Date _____

Description of the Task or Experience	Noticed Doing	Heard Saying	Saw Creating

Do not copy, post, or distribute



Source: Adapted from Sweeney, D., & Harris, L. S. (2017).

Protocol guidance adapted from Thunder & Demchak (2018).

What makes the *Learning About Learners Protocol* so powerful is the information the protocol provides. It empowers us to take an asset-focused stance with each child and family. Every child brings valuable knowledge and expertise to our settings. When we spend time getting to know our learners and noticing their strengths, we can intentionally leverage these strengths for the benefit of our whole learning community. The *Learning About Learners Protocol* can help facilitate our partnerships with families and leverage their strengths for the benefit of our learning community as well.

This work to know each of our learners is worth our time and energy. Knowing learners builds positive teacher-student relationships, which has the potential to accelerate learning and development (effect size = 0.47) (www.visiblelearningmetax.com). Acting on these relationships to create meaningful partnerships can grow our teacher credibility. To effectively partner with our learners, we also need to partner with families.

PARTNERSHIPS WITH FAMILIES

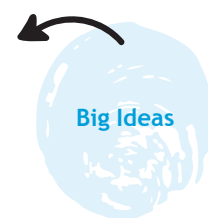
Our young learners are already confident members of their family communities, and as they enter our centers and schools, they begin to see themselves as members of new communities—our learning communities. Our partnerships with families can help maximize children’s learning and development by building a two-way bridge between home and school.

We know children’s achievement has the potential to accelerate when families are involved in their children’s education (effect size = 0.42) (www.visiblelearningmetax.com). This does not mean waiting for families to come to our schools and centers, but rather it means that we must actively engage families, meeting families where they are, and creating family partnerships.

Let’s look back at the specific language that describes partnerships within the big ideas for teaching, learning, and development in early education (p. 29). These big ideas provide us with a vision for meaningful family partnerships: We work together as evaluators of learning growth, together we have high expectations for learning, we establish trust, and we continually seek feedback from families about our impact.

The first step to forming a partnership with families is genuinely believing that every family is an expert about their own child and that every family has “funds of knowledge” (Vélez-Ibáñez & Greenberg, 1992). Funds of knowledge are ways of showing and knowing that are unique, brilliant, and important to children’s learning and development.

From our beliefs, we develop expectations and actions. When we believe that we should partner with every family to learn from and with them, then we expect to grow this partnership with every family and we take actions to intentionally form this partnership.



Intentionally communicating with families is one way to form a partnership. Communication has two directions: us telling or sharing *and* us listening. Let's begin by reflecting on what we already do.

REFLECTION

		What I Already Do
Who?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Who do you communicate with in your learners' families and who communicates with you? 	
How?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> How do you communicate with your learners' families? How do they communicate with you? 	
When?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> When, during the year and during each week or day, do you communicate with your learners' families? When do families respond? 	
Where?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Where do you talk with or meet with families? Where do families prefer to talk or meet? 	
What?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> What do you share or tell? What do you listen for? What do families share or tell? What do they want to know? 	

Look back at what you already do and note the following:

- How much of what you already do is focused on you—what works for you, what you tell and share, what you initiate?
- How much of what you already do is focused on families—what works for them, what they tell and share, what they initiate?
- How much of your communication involves you telling and sharing? How much is focused on listening and learning?
- How are you meeting families where they are?

Take a moment to write what you noticed about your current practices:



By listening to and learning from families, we can rely on families as resources to help us create continuity of context for our learners. Continuity of context means that home and school share familiar aspects. This continuity can be found in routines, language, songs and stories, and traditions and celebrations. When we create continuity between home and school, the familiarity allows learners to show what they know readily and enables each learner to see themselves as having valuable knowledge. This intentional cohesiveness from home to school is one aspect of culturally responsive teaching (Hammond, 2014). To create this continuity, we need to rely on families as resources.

Families have much to contribute to our learning community as fellow learners and even as teachers. When we ask families to teach our learning community about their everyday routines, heritage languages, stories and songs, and traditions and celebrations, then we position every family as an expert. When we rely on families as resources, we leverage their strengths to benefit our learning community and we grow our appreciation of children's rich home lives. The following figure provides examples of each of these areas.

Component and Definition	Examples From Hazel Roblero, an Early Childhood Educator
<p>Routines. When we ask, <i>What is a typical day like for you and your child?</i> we learn which school routines are familiar and unfamiliar, which home routines are significantly connected to school, and which home routines could be translated to school in order to improve our school day.</p>	<p>Routines. Hazel learns some families do not wear any shoes in their home and others regularly change into house shoes. This routine becomes a powerful area of expertise for children to lead and teach when the class learns to change into rain and snow boots and to tie shoes. Hazel also learns some families use the routine of packing snack or lunch as a special time to discuss the upcoming school day and some families regularly engage in a family meal with shared dishes. As a result, Hazel checks with every family about food allergies, and her class has none! Hazel and her teaching assistant create shared plates of snack while also allowing children to bring and enjoy their individual snacks.</p>
<p>Language. For some of our learners, school is a space where they are learning and speaking a new or additional language. We need to protect space for children to practice and connect their heritage languages by including books, songs, and labels in these languages. We can model being language learners by asking children and their families to teach our learning community words, phrases, and songs in their heritage languages. We can also empower families by communicating the value of deepening and expanding their children’s heritage language.</p>	<p>Language. Hazel has books, board games, song books, and recipes in multiple languages that children borrow. Families help her create labels for classroom materials with photos and multiple languages. When Hazel’s class studies plants, she takes a video of herself exploring her backyard, pointing to plants and naming them. She shares this video with families and asks them to share what they discover around their homes. One family, who speaks Karenni, makes a video of Mom pointing to different plants and parts of plants naming each in Karenni.</p>
<p>Songs and Stories. Often in early childhood, we use familiar children’s songs and stories to create community and to contextualize and explore concepts and skills. However, what we consider familiar may not be familiar to all learners and their families. We need to discover the familiar songs and stories of each family, their favorite songs to sing and books to read together, their oral storytelling traditions, and the music of their homes. Sharing stories, books, songs, and music will help to ensure that our learning community welcomes and includes every learner and that our exploration of concepts and skills takes place in truly familiar contexts.</p>	<p>Songs and Stories. Hazel partners with her Spanish-speaking families to identify traditional children’s songs and stories in Spanish and to pair them with traditional children’s songs and stories in English. Some songs are familiar in both languages but others are unique. For example, when the class reads and sings variations of <i>There Was An Old Woman</i> to practice sequencing, they also read and sing variations of <i>La Rana Cantaba Debajo Del Agua</i>, a traditional children’s song in Spanish that also practices sequencing. After singing the counting song <i>One Elephant</i>, a child’s father teaches the class to sing <i>Un Elefante Se Balanceaba</i> with actions while a grandma teaches the class the same song in French.</p>
<p>Traditions and Celebrations. Every culture, religion, and family have their own unique traditions and celebrations that young children are learning about, looking forward to, and talking about. Learning about and respecting families’ traditions and celebrations deepens our relationship with them and helps children to see difference as an opportunity to learn as well as to see commonalities among us all. To truly be a community of learners, we need to be a community.</p>	<p>Traditions and Celebrations. Hazel learned about <i>Gotcha Day</i> from a family who celebrates this special day each year to commemorate the day her family “got her” and she was adopted. On Eid-al Fitr, Hazel’s learners of the Muslim faith celebrate with family visits and special meals. On the days before and after, her children are abuzz with excitement about seeing relatives, and Hazel intentionally engages her children in sharing and talking about this celebration.</p>



CASE IN POINT

Darren Tinajero is a new educator having recently joined the staff of Lakeview Preschool. He is fluent in English and Spanish and has basic proficiency in sign language. Darren wants to learn more about his children and their families. When he meets with his first family, they ask why he wants to work with young children. He responds that he has a talent for languages and hopes to share that with his learners. He also notes that observing learning is magical and he enjoys the lightbulb moments when children acquire knowledge and skills. The family asks why he doesn't work with older children and he responds that he went to school to become an early childhood educator because his mother owned a childcare center.

What advice do you have for new educators, like Darren, as they join the profession so that families develop trust with them?

Darren learns that this family values play time, especially sports. He also learns that they allow their children to eat with their fingers and have not yet taught them to use silverware. Further, this family has a lot of stories about their ancestors and they often reference extended family members in their conversations, such as “That reminds me of Uncle Leo who said . . .” or “Remember when Grandma Alma made the fudge and forgot the chocolate?”

What can Darren do with this information? What advice do you have for the integration of this information into the classroom?

Learning about families' routines, languages, stories and songs, and traditions and celebrations are powerful starting points for building a two-way bridge between home and school. Our next step is to deepen this work by applying what we learn within our teaching, thus creating continuity of context through relying on families as resources. With this foundation, we can move toward the vision of working together as evaluators of learning growth, together we have high expectations for learning, we establish trust, and we continually seek feedback from families about our impact. In this way, we deepen our engagement with families to form true partnerships for learning.

PARTNERSHIPS FOR INCLUSION AND EQUITY

Another vital partnership within early childhood spaces is with our fellow educators—special educators, paraprofessionals, and specialists such as music teachers or physical therapists. Through partnership, our decisions ensure all our learners have equity of access and opportunity to the highest level of growth and learning. *This means all learners, regardless of their personal or social circumstances, have the access and opportunity to achieve their potential.*

Thus, we must seek to provide an inclusive environment for all learners—an environment that actively engages all learners, welcomes and embraces every learner as an important member of the community, and provides the necessary support to each learner so that they have an equal opportunity for success (see Jimenez et al., 2012; Spooner et al., 2011).

Early childhood inclusion embodies the values, policies, and practices that support the right of every infant and young child and his or her family, regardless of ability, to participate in a broad range of activities and contexts as full members of families, communities, and society. The desired results of inclusive experiences for children with and without disabilities and their families include a sense of belonging and membership, positive social relationships and friendships, and development and learning to reach their full potential. The defining features of inclusion that can be used to identify high quality early childhood programs and services are access, participation, and supports. (DEC/NAEYC, 2009, p. 1)



REFLECTION

<p>What is inclusion? Describe inclusion in your own words.</p>	<p>Compare and contrast this with what you witnessed or experienced as a learner yourself.</p>
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For us as early childhood educators, inclusion means that we must provide a wide range of experiences, tasks, and interactions that are accessible to every learner regardless of their unique identity profile. The experiences, tasks, and interactions must engage learners beyond compliance, but with a strong sense of belonging and efficacy. And finally, we must have strategic supports in place to ensure every learner's access and participation (DEC/NAEYC, 2009; NAEYC, 2019). Inclusion is based on the belief that all learners have the right to equity of access and opportunity to the highest level of learning possible.

We must also create an anti-racist, anti-bias learning community for all our members—a learning community that celebrates diversity, is asset focused, and is safe and supportive for every child and their family. As early childhood educators, we must start with ourselves and our reflections on our teacher identity, credibility, and self-efficacy; we began this work in Module 1. From a space of awareness and intentionality, we can work to actively disrupt injustice by taking an anti-racist and anti-bias stance and by actively building our partnerships with learners, families, and fellow educators.

All children have the right to equitable learning opportunities that help them achieve their full potential as engaged learners and valued members of society. Thus, all early childhood educators have a professional obligation to advance equity. They can do this best when they are effectively supported by the early learning settings in which they work and when they and their wider communities embrace diversity and full inclusion as strengths, uphold fundamental principles of fairness and justice, and work to eliminate structural inequities that limit equitable learning opportunities. (NAEYC, 2019, p. 1)



REFLECTION

What is educational equity? Describe educational equity in your own words.

Compare and contrast this with what you witnessed or experienced as a learner yourself.

In early childhood, our learning communities can be intentionally anti-bias spaces, where children develop positive social identities, experience and celebrate diversity through caring connections, recognize and make sense of justice and injustice through empathy, and express activism to help others through agency and confidence (Derman-Sparks & Edwards, 2019; NAEYC, 2019). Much of this work mirrors the work to create an inclusive learning environment, and it relies on knowing and valuing our learners and their families. It also relies on our partnerships with fellow educators.

Our partnerships with fellow educators empower us to make this vision of inclusion and equity a reality in our early learning spaces. Like our partnerships with learners and families, we must begin from an asset-focused stance, believing each colleague brings strengths, perspectives, and experiences to be leveraged for the benefit of the whole teaching and learning community. Communication through both talking *and* listening is critical among partners. It is also important to have a common understanding of the partners' shared roles and unique responsibilities within those roles. Table 2.1 delineates the five roles within partnerships among educators as they work together to create inclusive and equitable learning spaces.

2.1 5 Roles and 4 Partners

Partner	Instruction	Assessment	Communication	Leadership	Recordkeeping
<i>Roles of the General Educator</i>	<p>Teaching individuals, small groups, and whole class</p> <p>Monitoring learners' progress</p> <p>Implementing adaptations designed with special educator</p> <p>Implementing integrated concepts and skills with specialist</p>	<p>Conducting and documenting formative and summative evaluations</p> <p>Identifying significant junctures for self-, peer, and family feedback</p> <p>Implementing structures and routines for effective formative evaluation and feedback practices</p>	<p>Collaborating with special educator and specialist on curriculum</p> <p>Collaborating to analyze the effectiveness of implemented strategies, tasks, and adaptations</p> <p>Attending IFSP/IEP meetings</p> <p>Partnering with families</p>	<p>Designing structure and routines of the class</p> <p>Supervising paraprofessional and volunteers in class</p> <p>Providing partners with information on standards and curriculum</p>	<p>Recording daily and unit plans</p> <p>Maintaining attendance and assessment records</p> <p>Attending problem-solving meetings</p>
<i>Roles of the Special Educator</i>	<p>Teaching individuals, small groups, and whole class</p> <p>Adapting materials and instruction</p> <p>Coordinating supports for individual children</p>	<p>Administering educational tests</p> <p>Monitoring learners' progress through formative evaluation</p> <p>Identifying significant junctures for self-, peer, and family feedback</p>	<p>Collaborating with general educator and specialist on curriculum</p> <p>Collaborating to analyze the effectiveness of implemented strategies, tasks, and adaptations</p> <p>Attending IFSP/IEP meetings</p> <p>Partnering with families</p>	<p>Training and supervising paraprofessionals</p> <p>Facilitating the use of related service personnel</p>	<p>Developing IFSP/IEP</p> <p>Maintaining formative evaluation records</p> <p>Maintaining records of curricular adaptations</p>

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Partner	Instruction	Assessment	Communication	Leadership	Recordkeeping
Roles of the Paraprofessional	<p>Following the instructional plans as implemented by the general educator</p> <p>Implementing adaptations designed by special educator</p> <p>Providing specialized assistance, including personal care</p> <p>Reteaching and facilitating deliberate practice</p>	<p>Assisting and supporting with formative evaluation</p> <p>Collaborating with general and special educators to monitor learners' progress</p>	<p>Collaborating to analyze the effectiveness of implemented strategies, tasks, and adaptations</p> <p>Assisting teachers in communication with families</p> <p>Maintaining communication with school personnel</p> <p>Honoring confidentiality of learners' information</p>	<p>Facilitating social relationships among children</p> <p>Creating a positive environment for learners</p> <p>Modeling effective communication strategies for other staff</p>	<p>Maintaining logs and time sheets as required to document contact time</p>
Roles of the Specialist	<p>Teaching whole class</p> <p>Monitoring learners' progress</p> <p>Implementing adaptations designed with special educator</p> <p>Implementing integrated concepts and skills with general educator</p>	<p>Collaborating with educators to monitor learners' progress</p> <p>Identifying significant junctures for self-, peer, and family feedback</p>	<p>Collaborating with general educator and special educator on integrated curriculum</p> <p>Collaborating to analyze the effectiveness of implemented strategies, tasks, and adaptations</p> <p>Attending IFSP/IEP meetings</p> <p>Partnering with families</p>	<p>Designing structure and routines that complement the specialized class taking place within the class</p> <p>Supervising paraprofessional and volunteers in class</p> <p>Providing partners with information on specialized standards and curriculum</p>	<p>Recording daily and unit plans</p> <p>Maintaining attendance and assessment records</p> <p>Attending problem-solving meetings</p>

Source: Adapted from Frey, N. (2003).



CASE IN POINT

Lizbeth Sandoval and Cynthia Pacheco are educators who have just started to collaborate; Cynthia was just hired as the new special educator for the preschool program. The previous special educator used a pull-out model and removed learners with disabilities from the class to provide specialized services. Lizbeth was worried that the children were missing interactions with peers and language development opportunities, not to mention that she did not know what the focus was and thus could not reinforce the skills that the special educator was providing. In addition to the two teachers, Tina Le is a paraprofessional in the class. The three of them had a planning meeting and quickly agreed that they could provide services to the learners in the regular classroom during centers, small groups, and whole group.

A few weeks later, the three teachers met to discuss their progress in meeting learners' needs. Lizbeth noted that she had a better sense of the needs of the children and she also saw a change in her own teaching to meet learners' needs when they were with her. Cynthia said that she really enjoyed being in the classroom and that the children in her small groups were really making progress. Tina shared that she wasn't sure what she was supposed to be doing during small groups and centers; she felt that she was just walking around and supervising and not doing anything that really helped the children.

Using the roles from Table 2.1, identify areas of clarity that the team might need to address.

Educator	Instruction	Assessment	Communication	Leadership	Recordkeeping
Lizbeth Sandoval					
Cynthia Pacheco					
Tina Le					



REFLECTION

Who do you partner with currently?

Return to Table 2.1 outlining *5 Roles and 4 Partners*. Which roles are **strengths** in your partnerships: instruction, assessment, communication, leadership, and recordkeeping? Circle or highlight these in the table. Then look below the roles and circle or highlight the responsibilities that are examples or evidence of these strengths.

Looking at the remaining roles, which one is priority for your team to bolster in order to achieve effective inclusion?

This is where your next conversation with your partners needs to begin.



CASE IN POINT

Sam Brooks, Maria Montiel, and Emma Vest have worked together for several years. Sam is a general educator, Maria is a paraprofessional, and Emma is a special educator. When he reflects on their partnership's roles and responsibilities, Sam notes many strengths in what they get done together as a team, but he also notes that they tend to talk about their children from a deficit point of view; "can't," "won't," and "don't" are frequently used. Their collaboration meetings follow a familiar pattern: Sam shares his frustrations about not reaching the same families, Maria lists off all the things she says the children can't, won't, or don't do; and Emma engages only when she can talk about "her kids." This pattern leaves all three educators feeling exasperated, defeated, and alone. Furthermore, Sam is seeing the impact of these conversations bleed over into their interactions with the children and their families. Sam has stopped trying to contact some families, Maria assumes learners can't or won't complete certain tasks or that they won't know something and will behave in a particular manner, and Emma only engages with the kids on her caseload. The children are now reacting to these assumptions by withdrawing.

Sam wants to disrupt his team's meeting pattern. He wants to operate from an asset-based mind frame during collaboration meetings. He reviews their collaborative roles and responsibilities and decides to begin with assessment. To help guide the conversation, Sam creates checklists for the whole team to use during choice time. They will each use the checklists to be on the lookout for specific concepts and skills that the children demonstrate. Every child is on every teacher's list. In this way, Sam, Maria, and Emma are intentionally looking for and documenting the strengths every child brings to learning. The checklist helps focus the collaboration meetings on sharing these strengths and seeing every learner as a critical part of the learning community. The checklist also reminds all three teachers that they share all of the learners and provides Sam with specific, strength-based celebrations of learning to share with families.

There is more work for this team to do in order to create an inclusive, anti-bias learning space. Using the roles from Table 2.1, identify other areas that could help create inclusivity and equity by shifting to an asset-based stance.

Instruction	Assessment	Communication	Leadership	Recordkeeping



REFLECTION

Who else might be a powerful asset to your instructional practice for your children's learning and development? Perhaps a music teacher, occupational therapist, speech/language pathologist, community counselor, community activist, or a local bicycling initiative coordinator.

Brainstorm someone whose specialized knowledge could inform your teams' decisions for inclusion and equity, someone whose strengths could be leveraged for the benefit of the learning community in order to more effectively create access, participation, and supports and to intentionally take an anti-racist, anti-bias stance.

And now, let's consider our work specifically in this Playbook to learn about implementing instructional approaches and strategies with the potential to positively impact young children's learning and development. Think about the educators you already partner with. How can we invite those we partner with into this work? How can we share our current thinking and our deliberate practice? What might you do or say?

Our partnerships with fellow educators are a critical piece of collective teacher efficacy. Remember, working collaboratively has the potential to considerably accelerate learners' development. By building our expertise together, we can create inclusive, anti-racist, anti-bias learning spaces where every learner is valued and has the access and opportunity to become a Visible Learner.

VISIBLE LEARNERS

Knowing and valuing our learners as individuals is where we begin our partnerships. Let's also keep the goal of our partnerships in mind. Why are we intentionally working to develop these meaningful partnerships?

One of the hallmarks of early childhood education is child-centered or child-directed learning, where children's interests, discoveries, and questions lead the learning. Developing self-regulation, autonomy, and agency are often critical emphases of early childhood settings.

Our hope for young learners takes this core value a step further and deeper by making explicit young children's ownership of their learning journey. Our ultimate goal is to grow Visible Learners. In our Welcome, we first introduced the six characteristics of Visible Learners and you reflected on ways you are already intentionally growing these in your children (p. 5).

It may seem like too lofty of a goal to grow Visible Learners with infants and toddlers. But our work in early childhood is about laying the foundation for growing Visible Learners over time with every child. We can begin this work even with infants and toddlers by partnering with families.

Together, we should all intentionally model through our language and actions what it means to be Visible Learners. In other words, across all of our partnerships from learners to families to special educators and specialists, we need to take on the characteristics of Visible Learners ourselves.

REFLECTION

Let's return to the six characteristics of Visible Learners. Where do you see yourself within these characteristics? You may see yourself embodying these characteristics now, as you engage in learning about implementing instructional approaches and strategies with the potential to positively impact young children's learning and development. You may see yourself embodying these characteristics in other areas of your life—do you have a hobby you're learning more about? Are you attending school yourself while also teaching? In the right column, record the examples or evidence of when and how you demonstrated these characteristics.

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We Are Visible Learners



Visible Learners	I Am a Visible Learner When I . . .
Know their current level of understanding; they can communicate what they do and do not yet know	
Know where they are going next in their learning and are ready to take on the challenge	
Select tools to move their learning forward	
Seek feedback about their learning and recognize errors as opportunities to learn	
Monitor their learning and make adjustments when necessary	
Recognize when they have learned something and serve as a teacher to others	

As you continue working in this Playbook and working toward your other projects and goals in life, keep noticing ways you are a Visible Learner. The more we notice, the more we can be intentional in implementing the characteristics ourselves. And the more we live as Visible Learners, the more we'll see opportunities to develop these characteristics in our young learners.



These characteristics of Visible Learners bring the concept of Visible Learning into focus. Visible Learning is about *seeing learning through the eyes of our young learners and our learners seeing themselves as their own teachers*. When we intentionally grow Visible Learners, we are constantly seeing and communicating learning through the eyes of learners, and our learners develop self-regulation, autonomy, and agency to own their learning. This does not mean that we sit back and watch as children teach themselves; it means we learn from and partner with children to maximize their learning and development.





LEARNING INTENTION AND SUCCESS CRITERIA FOR MODULE 2

Now that you have engaged with the learning in this module, reread what we intended to learn (LI, the learning intention) and what it looks and sounds like to have mastered learning this (SC, the success criteria). Next, reread the levels, descriptions, and images of the path to mastery (the rubric). Reevaluate where you are right now for each success criteria. Use the box to reflect on the evidence you have of where you are and where you are headed next.

LI: We are learning the importance of partnering with our learners, their families, and our fellow educators, so that we can create inclusive, anti-racist, anti-bias learning spaces where educators and learners work together, trust is established, and feedback is valued.

SC: I'll know I've learned this when I can

Beginning Becoming aware 	Emerging Initially trying 	Developing Deliberately practicing 	Expanding Intentionally stretching 	Bridging Transferring and generalizing 
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Icon source: istock.com/rambo182

• Explain why partnerships with our learners, their families, and fellow educators are central to effective, inclusive, anti-racist, and anti-bias teaching, learning, and development in early childhood.

• Describe what partnerships that are inclusive, anti-racist, and anti-bias look and sound like.

(Continued)

(Continued)

- Identify and implement ways to build inclusive, anti-racist, and anti-bias partnerships.

- Make connections among the big ideas for effective teaching, learning, and development in early childhood, these partnerships, and the characteristics of Visible Learners.

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