

# *Getting Ready: a Relationship-Focused Intervention to Support Parent Engagement Birth to Five*





# Getting Ready Intervention

- ❑ The Getting Ready intervention is an integrated, multi-systemic, ecologically-based intervention that promotes school readiness through enhancing *parent engagement* for children from birth to age five.
- ❑ The model is focused on supporting the dyadic parent-child relationship, and an exchange of ideas and developmentally-appropriate expectations for children between parents and early childhood professionals (ECPs) (Sheridan, Marvin, Knoche, & Edwards, 2008).
- ❑ Professionals are trained to use *Triadic* (McCollum & Yates, 1994) and *collaborative* (Sheridan & Kratochwill, 2008) strategies in their work with families.

# Aims and Objectives



- ❑ The overall project examined:
  - ✓ effects on children's social-emotional, behavioral, and cognitive development (school readiness);
  - ✓ effects on parents' engagement with children; and
  - ✓ the degree to which parent engagement contributes to child outcomes.
  
- ❑ The study took place in the context of highly regulated, comprehensive early intervention and pre-K programs (*Early Head Start, Head Start*).
  - ✓ Intervention was delivered during home visits and other interactions that occurred between early childhood professionals and families.

# Parent-Child Relationship

- ❑ *Parental engagement* is highly predictive of a child's developing competence in cognitive, social-emotional, and behavioral domains (DeRuiter & Van IJzendoorn, 1993; McWayne et al., 2004).
- ❑ Parental characteristics of *warmth, sensitivity and responsiveness; and support for a child's emerging autonomy* are highly predictive of children's socioemotional and cognitive development (NICHD Early Child Care Research Network, 2002).
- ❑ Active and meaningful parental *participation in language- and literacy-related activities with young children* are important in facilitating optimal school readiness and success (Arnold, Lonigan, Espinosa, 2002; Pan, Rowe, & Singer, 2005; Weigel, Martin, & Bennett, 2006; Wood, 2002).

# Parent-Professional Relationship

- ❑ Relationships between parents and other adults responsible for the child's learning and development are important for establishing experiences that are consistent, coherent, and coordinated as children move between home and community (school) settings.
- ❑ Effective family-school relationships:
  - ✓ correlate with positive social-emotional and behavioral outcomes for children and families, and bolster intervention efficacy and efficiency (Grolnick & Slowiaczek, 1994; Haynes, Comer, & Hamilton-Lee, 1989; Masten & Coatsworth, 1998);
  - ✓ facilitate early learning and smooth transitions across systems (Early, Pianta, Taylor, & Cox, 2001; Eayrs & Jones, 1992; Ramey, 1999).



# Parent Engagement

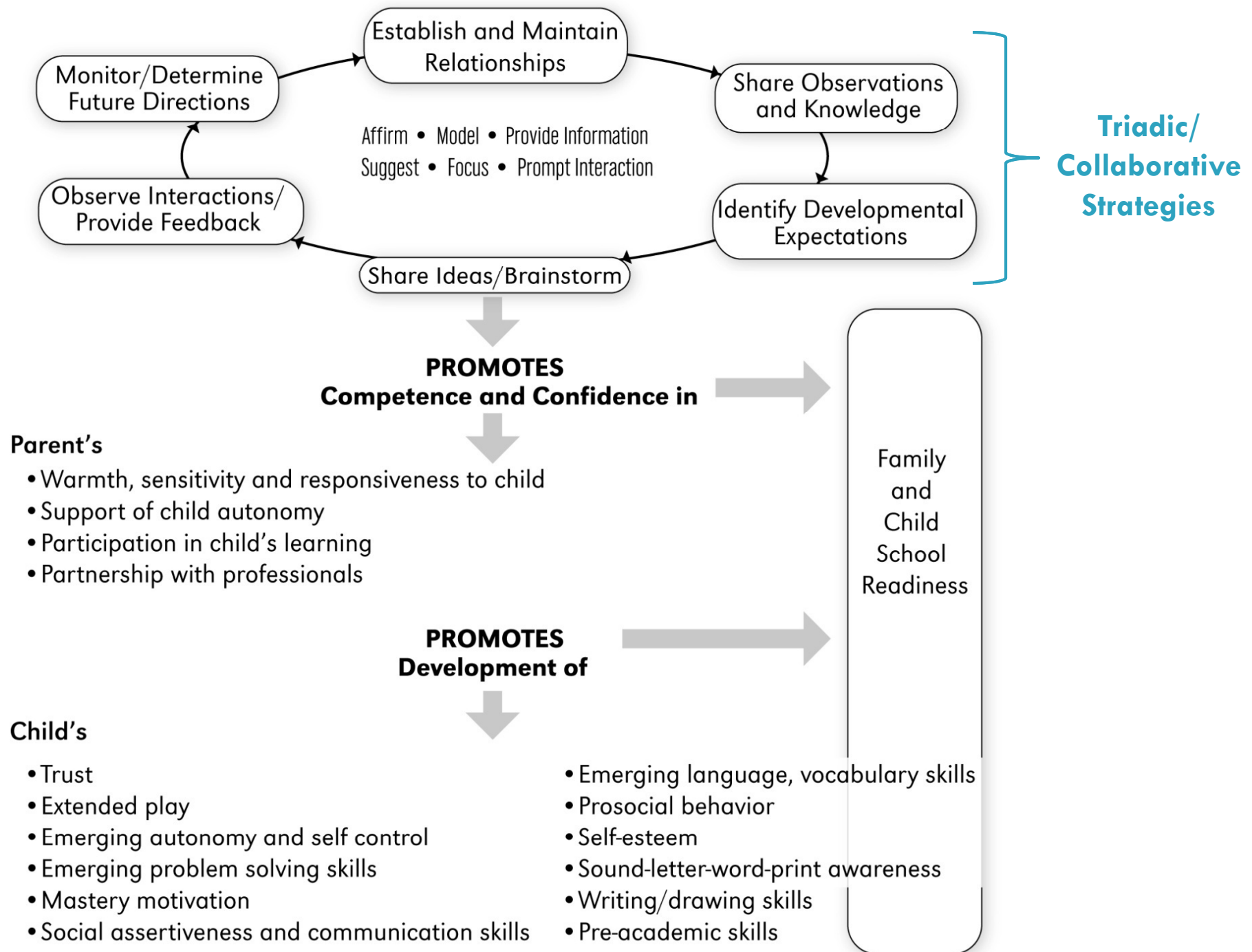
## ❑ Parent engagement with children includes:

- ✓ *warmth, sensitivity, and responsiveness;*
- ✓ *support for a child's emerging autonomy;*
- ✓ *active and meaningful participation in learning.*







## ❑ Parent engagement with professionals includes interactions that:

- ✓ *support families in enhancing the “curriculum of the home”;*
- ✓ *help children and families navigate the transition from home to school.*





# Performance Sites

PROGRAM	<i>Enrollment Baseline</i>	<i>Mean Age (baseline)</i>	<i>Infant/Toddler</i>	<i>Preschool</i>	<i>Home-based</i>	<i>Center-based</i>
<b><i>Early Head Start</i></b>	N=211	11 months				
<b><i>Head Start</i></b>	N=219	43 months				

# Performance Sites

## **Early Head Start Home-Based**

- ✓ 20 Early Head Start home visitors, four rural communities
- ✓ Two community agencies
- ✓ 1/3 of families were Hispanic/ Latino; 7 bilingual family consultants
- ✓ 39% of home visitors had CDA; 35% had some training beyond high school, but no degree
- ✓ Weekly home visits

## **Head Start Center-Based**

- ✓ Lincoln is midsized regional city of 225,000
- ✓ 23 classrooms
- ✓ 100% of teachers had at least a bachelor's degree; all certified
- ✓ 6 home visits/ per academic year by classroom teacher

# Summary of Findings

- ❑ Data from investigations to date indicate that the intervention is effective at improving parenting behaviors known to support positive child outcomes. ***Compared to their counterparts in the control condition, parents in the Getting Ready treatment group:***
  - ✓ interacted with their children using a **greater degree of warmth and sensitivity;**
  - ✓ demonstrated more skills to **support their children's autonomy;**
  - ✓ provided more appropriate **supports for their children's learning;**
  - ✓ offered their children more **appropriate guidance and directives.**

# Summary of Findings

- ❑ Additionally, data indicate that the ***Getting Ready Intervention is effective*** at supporting child outcomes in preschool, including:
  - ✓ **social-emotional competencies** (Sheridan et al., 2009);
  - ✓ **language and literacy skills** (Sheridan et al., in submission)



# Summary of Findings

- ❑ Data also indicate that the Getting Ready intervention is being implemented with fidelity as evidenced by the observed behaviors of home visitors and teachers in their interactions with families (Edwards et al., 2009; Knoche et al., 2010).





## Getting Ready: Core Implementation Components

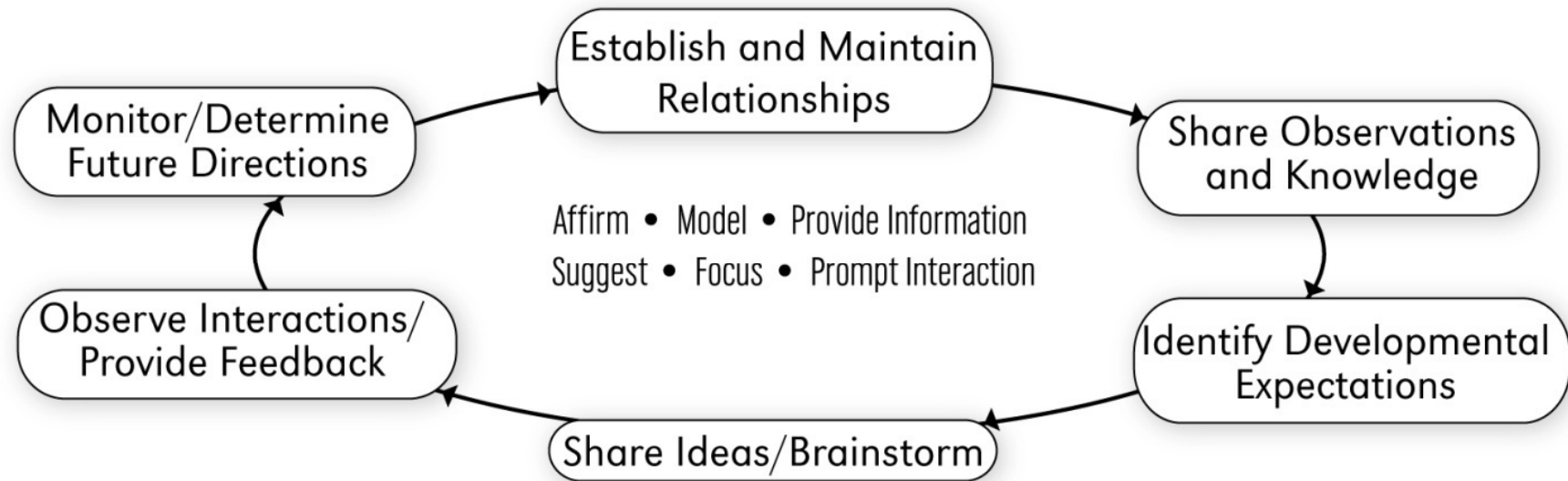
- Staff Selection
- In-Service Training/ Ongoing Coaching and Consultation**
  - Professional Development
- Staff Performance Assessment**
  - Fidelity
- Decision Support Data Systems
- Facilitative Administration
- Systems Intervention



# In-Service Training and Ongoing Coaching

- ❑ Professional development efforts were paramount in the Getting Ready Intervention.
- ❑ All early childhood educators received general training via a structured training institute, booster sessions, on-going group and individualized coaching (twice monthly).
- ❑ Efforts were instituted to move professionals toward internalization and full conceptual integration of practices (Brown et al., 2009).





*Getting Ready Triadic/ Collaborative Strategies*

# Ongoing Coaching

- ❑ Coaching followed a *reflective supervision* framework
- ❑ Individualized, targeted coaching
  - ❑ Intervention was not prescriptive
- ❑ ECPs were provided video-mediated feedback to continually:
  - ❑ set goals,
  - ❑ improve skills, and
  - ❑ enhance their use of triadic/ collaborative strategies with families.



Staff Performance Assessment

# Staff Performance Assessment

- Additionally, video-taped recordings of home visits were collected by research staff in both treatment and control conditions to assess and understand fidelity.

## Videos were rated for:

- ECP's use of individual strategies (i.e., rate with which each Getting Ready strategy was used during home visit) as well as the total rate of strategy use;
- ECP's effectiveness at initiating parental interest and engagement;
  - the interest and engagement levels between parents and children, and parents and ECPs; and
  - the rate of interaction between parents-children and parents-ECPs.
- Fidelity measure included indicators of *participant responsiveness, adherence, quality, dosage, differentiation*.  
(Dane & Schneider, 1998; O'Donnell, 2008)

# Key Findings – Staff Assessment

- ❑ Relative to comparison participants, treatment group participants **offered more affirmations of parent's competence**, and had **higher ratings of overall effectiveness of intervention implementation**.
- ❑ Getting Ready strategies, when used by ECPs in the intervention group, supported a higher rate of interaction between parents and children (69% treatment vs. 54% control), and a higher quality rating of parental engagement with children during the home visit.

# Key Findings – Staff Assessment

- ❑ Some of the ECPs in the comparison group were delivering relatively high levels of parent-child and parent-professional strategies, independent of exposure to the Getting Ready intervention training and support.
- ❑ Overall, teachers with *higher levels of education* and *with more experience working in early childhood* received *higher ratings of effectiveness* than those with less education and experience.
- ❑ Experience conducting home visits, length of time in current work settings, and time since training in the Getting Ready intervention **did not** significantly relate to professionals' use of strategies or effectiveness.



## Getting Ready: Lessons Learned for Implementation



# Lessons Learned



- ❑ Individualized intervention poses unique challenges for implementation research.
  - ❑ Relationship-focused intervention with variable, dynamic components
- ❑ Research and agency teams must be on the same page.
  - ❑ WHO is responsible for implementation when working with agency; primary responsibility falls on research team (external to agency) which presents some unique challenges.
- ❑ In efficacy trial, implementation data is needed on all conditions (e.g. treatment, comparison).
  - ❑ Track what is happening when intervention is NOT happening

# Lessons Learned



- ❑ Training and Support
  - ❑ Intentionality -- “let it happen” and “help it happen” to “make it happen” (MacFarlane, Bate, & Kyriakidou, 2004)
- ❑ Investigating issues of fidelity at this stage of research helped identify issues that will contribute to transportability/ scale-up

*For example:*

- ❑ Adoption of intervention strategies generally took more than one year;
- ❑ Experience in early childhood settings was positively associated with implementation and is consequently a staff selection factor to consider.

# Questions



Lisa Knoche, [lknoche2@unl.edu](mailto:lknoche2@unl.edu)

*Nebraska Center for Research on Children, Youth, Families and Schools; University of Nebraska-Lincoln*

Knoche, L.L., Sheridan, S.M., Edwards, C.P., & Osborn, A.Q. (2010). Implementation of a relationship-based school readiness intervention: A multidimensional approach to fidelity measurement for early childhood. *Early Childhood Research Quarterly*, 25, 299-313.

Sheridan, S. M., Marvin, C. A., Knoche, L. L. & Edwards, C.P. (2008). Getting ready: Promoting school readiness through a relationship-based partnership model. *Early Childhood Services*, 2, 149-172.

Brown, J.R., Knoche, L. L., Edwards, C.P., & Sheridan, S. M. (2009). Professional development: A case study of early childhood professionals in the Getting Ready Project. Special Issue: Professional Development in Early Childhood Programs. *Early Education and Development*, 482-506.