

# **COURAGEOUS CONVERSATIONS**

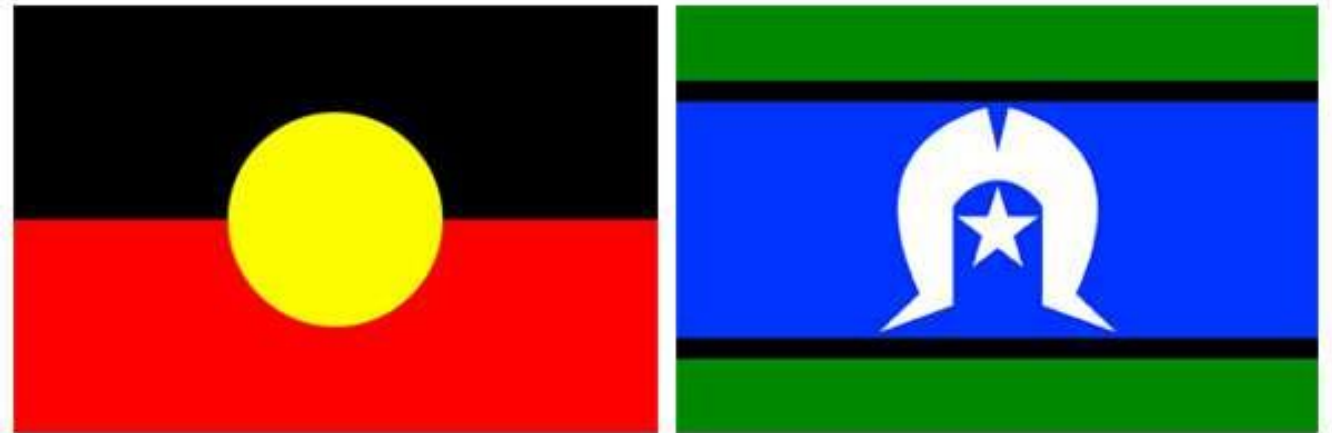
**PARTNERING WITH FAMILIES TO SUPPORT  
CHILD DEVELOPMENT**

**PART 2**

# ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY

We acknowledge Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples as the first Australians, and the Ngunnawal People, the traditional custodians of the land on which we live, work, play and meet.

We acknowledge the cultural and spiritual relationship that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people have in caring for and nurturing the land, water, and community for over 60,000 years. We acknowledge the injustices of the past and ongoing inequalities and commit to listening deeply. We commit to learning, growing and walking gently together, respectful of Country in our collaboration. We pay our respect to Elders past and present, and to any Aboriginal people with us today.



# INTRODUCTIONS

## Introduce yourselves!

- Name
- Workplace
- Role
- What brought you to the CoP today?
- What are you hoping to take away from the CoP today?



# CONTENT

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Recap of Part 1

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Homework reflections

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Case sharing

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Script writing activity

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Resources and supports

# WHAT IS A COMMUNITY OF PRACTICE (COP)?

Communities of Practice (CoP) are groups of peers who share a concern or a passion for something they do and learn how to do it better as they interact regularly (Wenger-Trayner and Wenger-Trayner, 2015).

There are three key elements to a Community of Practice:

- **Domain:** a shared area of interest
- **Community:** members interact and learn together
- **Practice:** members are practitioners who develop a shared repertoire of resources (Goodhue and Seriamlu, 2021)



# **BENEFITS OF BEING PART OF A COP - ARACY**

## **Short Term Value for Professionals:**

- Help with challenges
- Access to expertise
- Better able to contribute to team
- Confidence in one's approach to problems
- Fun of being with colleagues
- More meaningful participation
- Sense of belonging

## **Long Term Value for Professionals:**

- Forum for expanding skills and expertise
- Network for keeping abreast of field
- Enhanced professional reputation
- Increased marketability and employability
- Strong sense of professional identity



# AREAS OF DEVELOPMENT BIRTH TO 5 YEARS



- Physical development
- Social development
- Emotional development
- Cognitive development
- Language development

# DEVELOPMENTAL DELAY

Developmental delay is a term used to describe a delay in a child's development.

It means that a child finds it harder to do everyday things that other children their age can do, for example dress themselves, talk or walk.

It's important to remember that **all children develop in their own time.**



# NDIS DEFINITION OF DEVELOPMENTAL DELAY CRITERIA

The NDIS may consider that a child has a developmental delay when the child:

- is younger than 6 years of age **and**
- has a delay that results in substantial reduction in functional capacity. This means that the everyday activities the child does or can do is at a significantly lower competency level or is substantially different when compared with children of the same age **and**
- requires support for more than 12 months from a team of professionals who work collaboratively.

# GLOBAL DEVELOPMENTAL DELAY

Global Developmental Delay (GDD) is when a person has significant delays in 2 or more developmental domains (for example gross or fine motor skills, speech and language, social and personal skills).

GDD is a diagnosis that psychologists or paediatricians can make.

Diagnosis is guided by the DSM-5-TR.

# GLOBAL DEVELOPMENTAL DELAY

People with GDD may have associated diagnoses that can also contribute to their overall delay in development, for example:

- neurodivergent diagnoses like autism and ADHD
- cerebral palsy
- Down syndrome
- foetal alcohol spectrum disorder (FASD)
- fragile X syndrome
- hearing loss
- intellectual disability
- language and speech disorders.

# DISABILITY



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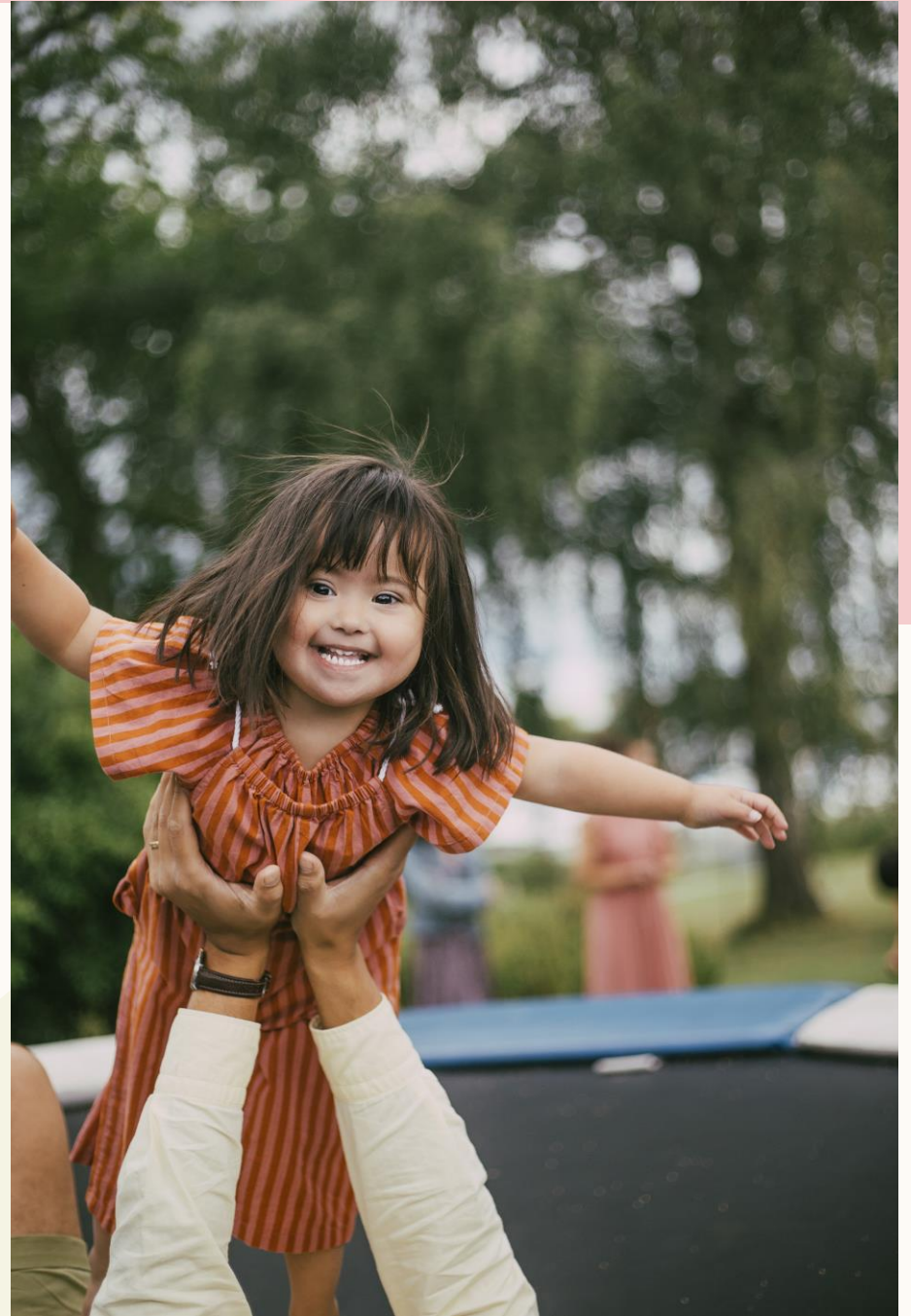
National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) defines Disability as: Total or partial loss of the person's bodily or mental functions (The Disability Act 1992).

The Disability Act (1992) describes a person's impairment of body or function, a limitation in activities or a restriction in participation when interacting with their environment.

# MEDICAL MODEL VS SOCIAL MODEL

In the **medical model of disability**, disability is seen as a health condition which needs to be remedied by medical professionals, like Doctors.

The **social model** of disability sees the environments and systems that people with disability live in as the problem, not the person with disability.



**HOW ARE WE GOING?**

**ANY QUESTIONS OR COMMENTS SO  
FAR?**



# BUILDING STRONG PARTNERSHIPS WITH FAMILIES

*‘Children are much more likely to reach their full potential in life when their family and education and care service work together. These benefits are evident when families and educators exchange information regularly and collaborate on consistent approaches to daily routines, child development and learning.’*

- The Australian Children’s Education & Care Quality Authority  
(ACECQA)



Children	Families	Early Childhood Setting	Community
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ greater consistency between home and education and care setting</li> <li>✓ children's learning and development is better supported</li> <li>✓ children can feel more confident and secure in new setting</li> <li>✓ aids the attachment between children and staff at the service</li> <li>✓ any concerns about the child may be shared and therefore appropriately supported</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ feel valued and respected</li> <li>✓ better understand their child's learning and development</li> <li>✓ feel supported and empowered in their role as parents</li> <li>✓ are comfortable to ask questions or to express concerns</li> <li>✓ understand more about the role of EC staff</li> <li>✓ have increased confidence in the service and their own parenting skills</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ learn from families' skills and expertise</li> <li>✓ information gained from families can be used to support children's learning and development</li> <li>✓ understand some issues affecting families</li> <li>✓ gain family feedback that helps staff to evaluate the effectiveness of their practices and overall service</li> <li>✓ families understand your role better</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ the setting becomes a hub for families within the community</li> <li>✓ families can network and support each other through shared experiences and child rearing practices</li> <li>✓ children can develop friendships with other children in their community</li> <li>✓ promote awareness of support services available to families</li> </ul>

**Table 1: Benefits of working in partnership with families**

# HOMework

- Reflect on your learnings from part 1.
- Choose one new idea/strategy/concept to try out.
- Take notes on what worked well, what didn't work so well, what strategies you used, the outcome of your actions.
- Check in with your 'buddy' over email, text or coffee! Offer support, suggestions and your professional expertise to your buddy.



# **HOMEWORK – HOW DID YOU GO?**



# CASE SHARING

- Share an unidentified case with the group. What is the context?
- What ideas/strategies have you implemented?
- What is working well?
- What are you finding challenging? What do you need help/support/guidance with?





# SHORT BREAK





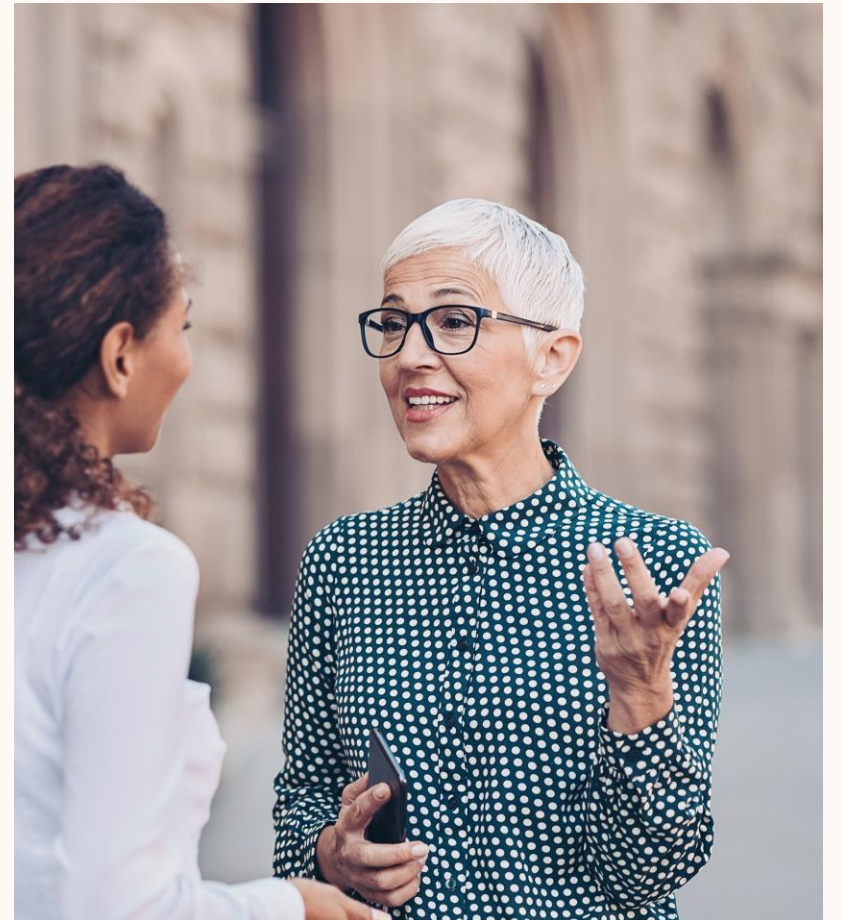
# STARTING THE CONVERSATION

What scripts you have used when initiating a conversation with a parent or carer about their child?

Example:

*I've noticed that (child) has (name observation/s).*

*Is this something you have noticed at home too?*



# THE EMOTIONAL BANK ACCOUNT – STEPHEN COVEY

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# MAKE CONVERSATIONS COUNT

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## **Know:**

- Understand your obligations under the Disability Discrimination Act 1992 (DDA).
- Knowing the child and family makes a difference.

## **Think:**

- Think about how you can best support the child and family.
- Think about the family's point of view.

## **Do:**

- Plan and prepare for conversations
- Listen actively and respectfully

# STRATEGIES TO BUILD STRONGER PARTNERSHIPS WITH FAMILIES.



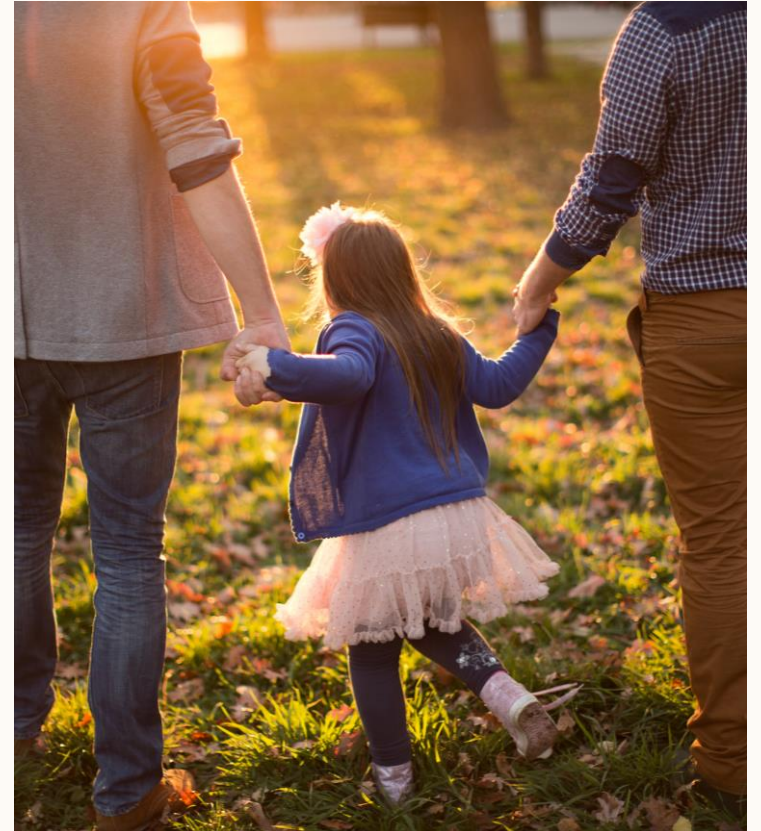
- Value each other's role in the child's life.
- Trust each other.
- Communicate openly and freely with each other.
- Share insights and perspectives about the child and engage in shared decision making.



# STRATEGIES FOR EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION WITH FAMILIES

- Speak in a clear and considerate way.
- Find and share positives about the child.
- Be open and honest.
- Give accurate information about observations.
- Think before you speak.
- Ask for parent/carer's input.
- Let parents make informed decisions.

- Raising Children Network



# STRATEGIES FOR EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION WITH FAMILIES

Use a problem-solving approach:

- identifying the problem.
- brainstorming as many solutions as possible.
- jointly evaluating the pros and cons.
- deciding on a solution to try.
- putting the solution into action.
- reviewing the solution after an agreed period.

- Raising Children Network





# COMMON BARRIERS FOR FAMILIES

1. Readiness
2. Capacity
3. Cost
4. Wait times
5. Time and competing priorities
6. Residency status and citizenship



# COMMON BARRIERS FOR FAMILIES

## Strategies to respond:

1. Listen
2. Be respectful
3. Educate yourself about programs, initiatives and supports available in the community that families can engage with.



# WHERE TO SEEK SUPPORT

Ask

Ask your supervisor or leadership team for advice.

Contact

Contact the Inclusion Agency for advice and support.

Refer

Make a referral to EACH with parent/carer consent.

# Do you have concerns about a child's development?

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## Observe the Child

Make some observations of the child's play, communication and behaviours. Consider completing a Developmental Milestones checklist to go alongside your observations.

### Remember:

A child under 6 years does not need a diagnosis to receive supports from EACH

## Talk with the parents or carers

Talk with parents or carers about your observations and concerns. Ask the family if they have noticed anything about their child's development. Remember the family know their child best.

## About EACH

When the family is ready, share information about EACH. EACH can support a family or carer to understand the child's needs and recommend what early connections are best for the child.  
<https://www.each.com.au/service/early-childhood-early-intervention>

## What is a Developmental Concern?

Developmental Concerns are concerns about a child's development, compared with other children their age. This may include how they:

- Play and move around;
- Do things to take care of themselves;
- Socialise with other children;
- Communicate what they want.

### Resources:

- **Early Childhood Approach: EACH Resources for families and communities**  
<https://www.each.com.au/ecei-resources-for-families/>
- **A potential observation tool you could use can be found BeYou website:**  
<https://www.beyou.edu.au/resources/betls-observation-tool>
- **The Australian Parenting Website supported by the Australian Government Department of Social Services:** <https://raisingchildren.net.au/>
- **The Developmental Milestones and the Early Years Learning Framework and the National Quality Standards**  
[https://www.dss.gov.au/sites/default/files/documents/05\\_2015/developmental-milestones.pdf](https://www.dss.gov.au/sites/default/files/documents/05_2015/developmental-milestones.pdf)
- **THRIVARY app provides guidance, information and learning on all things early childhood development and early intervention (0-8yrs),** <https://thrivary.com.au/>

## Refer to EACH

With consent from the family refer to EACH, or support them to self refer:  
<https://each.snapforms.com.au/form/ndis-referral-to-early-childhood-partners>

EACH is the NDIS Early Childhood Partner in ACT, Greater Ipswich, South West Sydney and Southern NSW. We deliver the Early Childhood Approach for children aged 0-8 years with a disability or developmental delay. We work together with parents, carers, and families to support children to have the best possible start in life.

**each**

# EACH IS HERE TO HELP

EACH online referral form (with parent/carer consent): [Referral to Early Childhood Partners \(snapforms.com.au\)](#)

[EACH Resource Page for Families and Communities](#)

[EACH Early Childhood Approach Facebook Group](#)

EACH Early Years Specialist (if the family is already engaged with EACH)

# HELPFUL RESOURCES

[BeYou – Preparing for difficult conversations with families](#)

[NSW/ACT Inclusion Agency](#)

[Effective communication with parents and carers: for professionals](#)

[Global Developmental Delay Factsheet – Big Fat Smile](#)

[Building strong partnerships with families - ACECQA](#)



# PADLET

## Inclusion of all children

### NSW/ACT Inclusion Agency



[inclusionagency.nswact.org...](http://inclusionagency.nswact.org...)

For Educators

The NSW/ACT Inclusion Agency provides free tailored inclusion support to educators in Centre Based Day Care, Family Day Care and Out of School Hours Care services.

## Building Relationships with children and families

### Relationships with Children - ACECQA



PDF

QA5 RelationshipsWithChildren

Research shows relationships are central to children developing acceptance, self-esteem and higher functioning thinking skills that contribute to positive learning

## Mental health for children, families and professionals

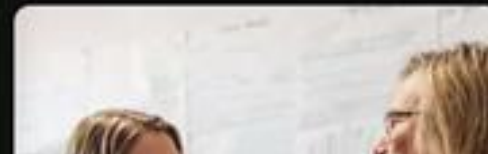
### Supporting Children with Complex Needs - Be You



YouTube

Supporting Children with Complex Needs

### Be You



## Environment Management for inclusion

### A child's View of Sensory Processing Disorder



YouTube

A Child's View of Sensory Processing Disorder from a child's perspective. Learn about Sensory Processing Disorder from a child's perspective.

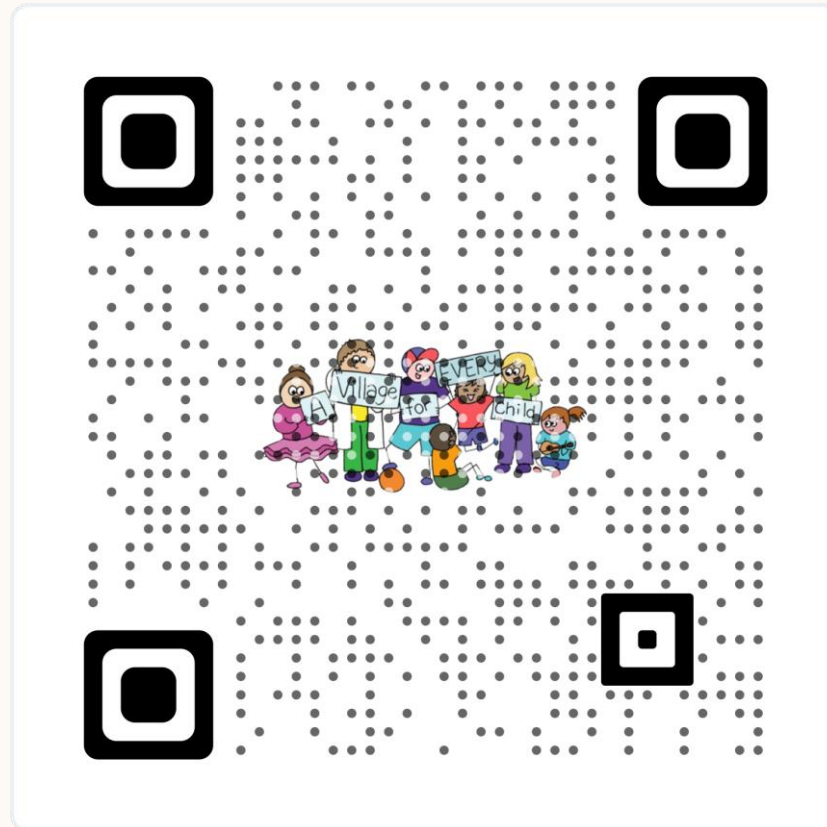
### Social Stories



# QUESTIONS?



# SESSION FEEDBACK







**THANK  
YOU**

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