



# Research Summary on Embedded Interventions

---

RESEARCHERS associated with an Institute of Education Sciences funded project<sup>1</sup> analyzed 38 research studies on embedded intervention. They wanted to find out the following:

- how the practice was defined across different studies,
- who implemented the practice and in what type of settings,
- what the characteristics of the children were and
- whether the practice was beneficial for young children.

Here is what the researchers learned.

How was the practice of embedding intervention defined?

Embedded intervention includes the use of intentional teaching strategies to address a specific learning goal within the context of everyday activities, routines, and transitions at home, at school, or in the community.

Who implemented embedded intervention and in what type of settings?

Almost half of the people implementing embedded intervention were preschool teachers. Others were assistant teachers and graduate students. Interventions were implemented in a variety of early childhood settings including preschool classrooms, early childhood special education classrooms, community-based child care programs, and Head Start.

What were the characteristics of the children who participated in the research?

About two-thirds of the children were boys. The children ranged in age from 2-7 years. About one-half of the children had some type of developmental delay. The remaining children had speech-language delays, autism, or Down syndrome.

Was the practice of embedding intervention beneficial for children?

Almost every study showed that children acquired targeted skills or made progress across a number of areas including language and communication, motor and adaptive skills, cognitive development, pre-academic skills, and social-emotional development. Slightly less than half

of the studies also reported that many children maintained these skills or used them in new ways, once the intervention had ended.

### Bottomline on the effectiveness of embedded intervention

Embedded intervention that involve intentional teaching on targeted skills appears to be an effective practice to help early childhood teachers address the learning goals of children with disabilities who are 2-7 years old within everyday activities, routines, and transitions. The research suggests that there are a variety of ways of implementing this practice that include making changes to the curriculum or learning environment, taking advantage of natural learning opportunities throughout the day, using systematic instructional procedures, and enlisting support from children's peers. Embedded intervention can be used effectively to help children learn across many domains including social-emotional development, communication, and school readiness.

<sup>1</sup>Snyder, P., Hemmeter, M.L., Sandall, S., & McLean, M. (2007). *Impact of professional development on preschool teachers' use of embedded instruction practices*. Grant awarded by the Institute of Education Sciences to the University of Florida (Project No. R324A070008). The information presented in this brief was adapted from work completed by project investigators and staff and does not represent an official position or policy of the Institute of Education Sciences.