

ADAPTATIONS

- Provide a selection of props or pictures that will allow children with limited language skills and dual language learners to learn more about topics that interest them and communicate their ideas more effectively.
- Adapt *materials* and *activities* as needed to ensure all children can participate as fully as possible.
- Observe children to know when to offer additional support, allow for independent exploration, or when to end an activity (“Maria, look how that toy is lighting up when you push that button, can you do it again?”).
- Individualize activities and experiences that are *responsive* to children’s interests, *temperament*, and developmental level so that all children can be successful.
- Break activities down into individual steps, giving concrete, clear directions and prompts. Provide instructions using auditory, physical, and visual cues, such as picture directions. Provide a visual representation of the steps to complete a task.
- Support and encourage children who have challenges completing a task. Be sensitive to children who have disabilities.
- Avoid overwhelming children with too much *stimulation*, especially those with special sensory needs. Adjust the environment to accommodate children who may need less stimulation.
- When using *adaptations*, try to use one that least interferes with the child and/or the activity. As the child becomes more independent, reduce or eliminate the use of an adaptation.
- Observe for barriers that may prevent a child from fully participating (unable to reach toys, difficulty using an object in an activity, or difficulty following directions).
- Help children who have difficulty trying new things, by introducing the material or changes slowly. Prepare children in advance for changes that are coming (“I will be asking children to clean up in 5 minutes.”) as a warning that clean up time is coming.
- Adjust the length of time allowed for an activity if needed and provide plenty of time for a child to respond independently.
- Label and/or color-code materials to aid recognition, selection, or use.
- Recognize when dual language learners or children with limited communication skills need additional support to be able to express themselves (providing words, visual cues, gestures, or simple sign language).
- Involve families in all aspects of the program, helping children learn about each other’s cultures.
- Build background knowledge by using multiple senses, offering real objects and hands-on materials and experiences whenever possible, as well as pictures and props such as flannel board stories.

