

Steps to Success: Introductory Video

(link for viewing at end of transcript)

[Music] Woman 1: It's so much better to have the mentor relationship, where it's a free exchange of ideas. Woman 2: ... empowering them, to let them know that you want to participate, you have the right to bring your voice. Woman 3: I think within myself I feel more confident.

Woman 4: I am a support system for her. I am not a criticizing element of this process. Woman 5: She really makes you feel like you have a part in what's going on.

Narrator: When the call went out to address children's needs for more language and literacy instruction, Head Start and Early Head Start responded by establishing a new mentor-coaching initiative. This initiative is designed to provide teachers and home visitors with Early Literacy Mentor Coaches. These ELMCs support staff efforts to build children's language and early literacy skills. Steps to Success is a comprehensive multimedia professional development program for ELMCs that promises to strengthen achievements of both children and adults.

Mentor-coaching is a unique task. What is a mentor? Mentors are educational companions. They focus on helping staff, or protégés, build a deeper understanding of how theories connect to practice. Mentors encourage their protégés to analyze their own practice, to engage in self-reflection, and experimentation. What is a coach? Coaches assist protégés in adopting new practices to encourage positive child learning outcomes. Coaches and protégés engage in problem-solving, examining when and how to incorporate different strategies by evaluating their impact on children's learning.

The Head Start Bureau has strategically blended these two proven approaches to extend professional development focused on enhancing protégés' literacy-related practices. These practices support children's positive language and literacy learning, that reflects the Head Start Child Outcomes framework. Steps to Success supports mentor-coaching: here's how it's done. There are four units within the Steps to Success instructional design. Each unit presents knowledge and skills mentor-coaches need for productive relationships with protégés.

They also present literacy content related to the Head Start Child Outcomes framework. Unit One provides an orientation to mentor-coaching, and ways to help mentor-coaches and protégés build a strong relationships. It recognizes that mentor-coaches and protégés come with a wide range of values and cultural traditions. It suggests effective approaches that honor these differences. You'll meet mentor-coaches who practice reflective inquiry with protégés, establishing a trusting relationship where they can safely share their strengths and weaknesses.

The early literacy component of this unit focuses on book knowledge and appreciation, and print awareness and concepts for children ages birth through five. You'll see the Head Start Child Outcomes framework brought to life in shared reading experiences. Teacher: [inaudible] Child: ma... ma...

Narrator: From building relationships, we move to Unit Two: Observation of Staff and Analysis. This unit will prepare you to meet the Head Start Program Performance Standards. You will learn to observe formally, consistently, and reliably. You will see and hear how observation sets the stage for protégés to talk and learn about their interactions with children. The early literacy component in this unit concentrates on early writing and alphabet knowledge. You will see how protégés support children in recognizing and utilizing the alphabet and building their early writing skills.

Child: ... tell her my story. Teacher: Oh, tell her your story now! Child: Um, once upon a time...

[Music] Narrator: In early childhood settings, the growth and development of adults is vitally linked to growth and development of the children. In Unit Three, Reflective Practice is introduced as a key strategy fostering this link. Practitioners who use reflection routinely examine the experiences, activities, and interactions that take place in the

classroom. They then make decisions about new approaches in their work with children, families, and each other. You'll learn about how mentor-coaches encourage protégés to be reflective -- independently and in structured conferences.

Teacher: [inaudible] Mentor-Coach: The number of the times, the number of, um, alphabet bingo, um, the number of beginning sounds... Narrator: Mentoring research shows that reflective practice, reflecting on their own development as well as that of the child, is essential in effective content-based mentor-coaching. The early literacy component in Unit Three focuses on language development. It includes strategies to promote listening and understanding, and speaking and communicating.

You'll see how protégés help children reach their fullest potential by engaging in interesting and meaningful conversation.

Teacher: Do I have to use my imagination? Child: ... Teacher: Well, now, you have to tell me that! Child: Yes, yes, you have to use your imagination. Teacher: Okay, thank you.

[Music] Narrator: Once the protégés have effectively collected data on what children know and can do, what do they do with it? The Head Start Program Performance Standards are clear on the need to use this data, and Unit Four shows you how. It describes how mentor-coaches support protégés in organizing data for making decisions, using the findings in the classroom, and involving parents in the assessment process.

You'll see protégés and mentor-coaches using portfolios and video analysis in setting learning goals and determining instructional strategies. Teacher: Williby wallaby wemily, an elephant sat on ... Child: Emily... Teacher: Emily!

Unit Four's literacy focus is on phonological awareness; perhaps one of the most challenging concepts to learn, and to teach. You'll see teachers demonstrating how any time, from circle time to snack time, can be a good time for encouraging phonological awareness. [Music] Each unit in the multimedia Steps to Success instructional design includes four distinct learning modules.

Let's take a look at a unit. The experience begins with a self-assessment exercise that can be completed online. Participants then apply what they've learned to a professional development plan. Next, a facilitator leads participants through a tutored video instruction, or TVI. The TVI establishes a foundation for the central ideas explored in the unit through expert instruction and video examples from early childhood settings throughout the country. It also provides exercises for participants to consider how the concepts apply to their own practice.

Participants are facilitated in Module Three through structured activities and group discussions. Module Four is self-guided. Early Literacy Mentor-Coaches complete exercises based on the unit's content. Steps to Success reflects the Head Start Performance Standards every step of the way. The Standards tell us that child development and early education programs must be led by staff who are knowledgeable about and actively demonstrate the goals and underlying philosophy of Head Start and Early Head Start.

Head Start has determined that mentor-coaching is a powerful professional development approach for achieving positive child outcomes in early literacy. This is what Steps to Success is all about. [Music]

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-- Permalink for viewing (requires Flash and JavaScript)

<http://videos.sorensonmedia.com/HEAD+START/000329-Steps+to+Success+-+Introduction+Video-2007-SD360p/49d26443Va56fB4caef8545A1a97e9681165>