



PEDALS: Intentional Connections in the Classroom

To recognize intentional connections in the classroom using the Simple Interactions tool, focus on the following key aspects:

- ★ Look for moments where infants or toddlers seek or enjoy physical closeness, as this signals comfort and bonding.
- ★ **Facial Expressions and Vocalizations:** Pay attention to the way infants and toddlers express themselves through facial expressions or sounds, and how caregivers mirror or respond. These interactions, like mimicking sounds or making faces, help develop emotional connections.
- ★ **Shared Attention:** Look for instances where both **Responsive Caregiving:** Watch for moments when caregivers respond to the infant or toddler's cues, such as when they make eye contact, smile, or vocalize. A caregiver's timely response shows recognition and fosters a sense of security and trust.
- ★ **Physical Touch and Proximity:** Meaningful connections often occur when caregivers gently touch, hold, or sit close to the child. the child and caregiver are focused on the same object or activity, such as playing with a toy or reading a book together. Shared attention fosters a connection by creating a joint focus between the two.
- ★ **Non-verbal Communication:** Infants and toddlers communicate a lot through body language, gestures, and facial expressions. Observe how caregivers respond to these cues—whether they acknowledge or gently guide the child, which shows a deep understanding and fosters connection.
- ★ **Emotional Comfort:** Meaningful connections are also seen when a child seeks comfort, and the caregiver offers reassurance or support, such as calming a distressed child or offering praise and encouragement.