

NEXT

An NAEYC
Professional
Development
Resource

young children

Derry Koralek, Editor in Chief • Amy Shillady, Senior Editor

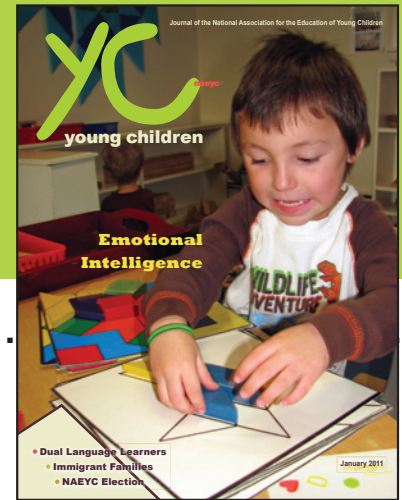
Using NEXT for Young Children

NEXT for Young Children suggests ways to build on the content of selected articles from *Young Children*, the award-winning, peer-reviewed professional journal published bimonthly by NAEYC. The training outlines for these articles can be used in a variety of ways: teacher educators can use them in their classes; staff development specialists can use them to design workshops; and center directors and school principals can use them to plan staff meetings or training sessions. Early childhood education students and practitioners may also wish to use them alone or with colleagues or peers.

Each training outline includes the following features:

1. **Key Messages**—important content points.
2. **Glossary**—definitions of key terms.
3. **Self-study**—questions to build on the content of the article and reflect on current practices.
4. **Discuss with one or more colleagues/peers**—discussion prompts related to personal experiences, current practices, and connections between research and practice.
5. **Action steps**—opportunities to apply and document application of new knowledge and skills.
6. **Continue learning**—suggested resources for increasing knowledge and skills.

In addition, each outline indicates the NAEYC Standards for Early Childhood Professional Preparation Programs and NAEYC Early Childhood Program Standards that are most closely related to the content (see the box on the right at the top of each outline).



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A few notes

- All page numbers refer to *Young Children*, Volume 66, Number 1, unless otherwise noted.
- No permission is needed to make copies of NAEYC-copyrighted *Young Children* articles and *NEXT for Young Children* as long as they bear a credit line and are distributed at no cost.
- In group sessions, facilitators can ask participants to do activities in pairs, small groups, or as classroom teams, depending on the setting. Volunteers can record and disseminate the ideas generated in the sessions.
- Visit NAEYC's website for additional professional development materials at www.naeyc.org.

NEXT for Young Children contents

[The Neurobiology of Emotional Intelligence: Using Our Brain to Stay Cool under Pressure](#) ([click to view](#))

by Holly Elissa Bruno • Study guide by Amy Shillady

[Storybook Reading for Young Dual Language Learners](#) ([click to view](#))

by Cristina Gillanders and Dina C. Castro • Study guide by Cristina Gillanders and Dina C. Castro

The Neurobiology of Emotional Intelligence: Using Our Brain to Stay Cool under Pressure

by Holly Elissa Bruno (pp. 22–27) • Study guide by Amy Shillady

This article shares ideas and strategies from the evolving field of social neuroscience—the study of how relationships affect cells in our body and how our brains and nervous systems affect our relationships. Early childhood educators can use knowledge of their biological and rational processes as well as their prior experience to make wise decisions under stress.

The content of this article is most closely related to NAEYC Standards for Early Childhood Professional Preparation Programs 1, and NAEYC Early Childhood Program Standards 1, 3, and 10.

Key Messages

- ➔ Our brain and nervous system react unconsciously to people and circumstances in our environment.
- ➔ Our biological impulses can protect us from harm, but if we rely only on them, we risk losing our cool under pressure—jeopardizing our relationships with peers and the children and families we serve.
- ➔ We can use our inborn biological processes and our executive function, instincts, and sense of humor to act wisely under stress.

Glossary

Emotional intelligence—the ability to acknowledge and learn from our feelings so we can understand ourselves and others accurately and respond appropriately

Neurobiology—a branch of science focusing on the parts and processes of the brain and nervous system

Executive function—our brain’s ability to process information, determine how to respond, monitor those responses, and plan for the future

Intuition—insight and understanding about how to respond to people, the environment, and situations based on past experiences

Self-study

Respond to the following questions in the space provided.

In your view

1. Write down three new things that you learned from reading this article. If possible, compare your choices with others who have read it.

2. What research findings cited by the author(s) did you find most interesting? Why were they of particular interest to you?

3. How does the content of this article relate to the curriculum, common core state standards, state and local early learning standards, or other requirements applicable to your setting?

Reflect and revisit your practice

1. Which ideas in this article affirm your work with or on behalf of young children and families?

2. What ideas and research findings in this article raise questions about your practice? What new approaches might you try?

3. What kinds of supports do you and your colleagues need to try out these new ideas (such as assistance from a colleague and/or additional resources for your setting)?

Discuss with one or more colleagues/peers

Discuss the following questions with at least one colleague/peer. Record the key points of your discussion in the space provided.

Consider current practice

1. What can you recall about the last time you made a decision under pressure? What was stressful about the situation? What were you feeling before you made the decision? After? Looking back, do you think you made the best decision given the circumstances? What would you do differently if you had the chance?

2. How do you think your decision making impacts your colleagues/peers? The children and families you serve?

3. How can you use your emotional intelligence to make decisions in the future? How can you model this type of decision making for the adults in your life? The children?

Connect research and practice

1. What does the research cited in this article say about the role the amygdala plays in how we respond to stressful situations? What does the phrase *amygdala hijack* mean?

2. How do researchers describe the effects of mirror neurons?

3. What do researchers say about the role of our executive function in decision making?

4. What does research say about the roles of intuition and humor in the decision-making process?

Action steps

Try out these ideas over the next 2 to 4 weeks. Document and discuss your experiences with others.

Implement and document

- 1. Observe and record.** At the end of each day, think about times when you may have let your frustration get the best of you, such as when you found yourself raising your voice. Describe the stressful circumstances and your reactions in a journal. Write down what happened, how you felt, and what decisions you made as a result. Also record how others (children and/or adults) responded to your decisions.
- 2. Reflect, plan, and implement.** Review your journal, and identify your hot buttons based on the themes that arose in the entries. Once you are aware of what sets you off, think about ways to calm yourself before making decisions. For example, write a soothing quote on an index card and keep it in your pocket to bring out when you feel your blood pressure rising. If certain circumstances always cause frustration, think about ways to approach the situation differently and/or better meet the needs of others. For example, if you always have trouble gaining attention when giving instruction, consider the audience's needs. Perhaps you could alter some physical aspects of the environment—such as classroom setup—so that everyone can hear you more clearly.
- 3. Involve families.** Share information with families by (1) summarizing the article and posting the summary on your program's website, (2) organizing a workshop about emotional intelligence and decision making, and/or (3) creating and distributing a list of resources that provide practical ways adults can support children's emotional intelligence.

Discuss experiences and outcomes

Summarize your experiences and outcomes in the space provided, and then discuss them with at least one colleague/peer.

1. What did you do that was successful?

2. What challenges did you face? How did you address the challenges?

3. Have you noticed changes in your program as a result of the new strategies? Did anything surprise you?

4. How can you build on your progress?

Continue learning

Consult these resources to further build knowledge and skills related to the content of this article.

Bruno, H.E. 2008. *Leading on Purpose: Emotionally Intelligent Early Childhood Administration*. New York: McGraw-Hill.

Jorde Bloom, P. 2007. *From the Inside Out: The Power of Reflection and Self-Awareness*. Washington, DC: NAEYC.

Lantieri, L. 2008. *Building Emotional Intelligence: Techniques to Cultivate Inner Strength in Children*. Boulder, CO: Sounds True, Inc.

Rand, M.K. 2000. *Giving It Some Thought: Cases for Early Childhood Practice*. Washington, DC: NAEYC.

This article describes how reading storybooks aloud can promote the early language and literacy development of young dual language learners. Strategies include engaging children by reading culturally relevant books to them multiple times in English and the children’s home languages, teaching a set of core words prior to and during reading, and expanding on main ideas, such as using the core words in other classroom learning centers.

The content of this article is most closely related to NAEYC Standards for Early Childhood Professional Preparation Programs 1 and 2, and NAEYC Early Childhood Program Standards 2, 3, and 7.

Key Messages

- ➔ By listening to stories, children learn about written syntax and vocabulary, and develop phonological awareness and concepts of print—all of which support literacy skill development.
- ➔ For dual language learners, vocabulary development in English requires both incidental learning and direct teaching of words. Teachers can read stories first in the children’s home language and then in English to facilitate learning.
- ➔ When reading aloud, teachers need to use strategies that maximize the opportunities for children to understand the text, so they can join in even if they are in the early stages of learning English.

Glossary

Vocabulary development—skills relating to the knowledge of word meaning and pronunciation

Syntax—the correct construction of sentences, including word order

Phonological awareness—the ability to attend to and manipulate units of sound in speech such as syllables and words

Self-study

Respond to the following questions in the space provided.

In your view

1. Write down three new things that you learned from reading this article. If possible, compare your choices with others who have read it.

2. What research findings cited by the author(s) did you find most interesting? Why were they of particular interest to you?

3. How does the content of this article relate to the curriculum, common core state standards, state and local early learning standards, or other requirements applicable to your setting?

Reflect and revisit your practice

1. Which ideas in this article affirm your work with or on behalf of young children and families?

2. What ideas and research findings in this article raise questions about your practice? What new approaches might you try?

3. What kinds of supports do you and your colleagues need to try out these new ideas (such as assistance from a colleague and/or additional resources for your setting)?

Discuss with one or more colleagues/peers

Discuss the following questions with at least one colleague/peer. Record the key points of your discussion in the space provided.

Consider current practice

1. Have you been with a group of people who spoke a language you did not understand? How did you feel? What did you do to communicate? Did someone help you? If so, what did they do or say?

2. If you teach children who are dual language learners, what behaviors have you observed when reading stories aloud? What strategies have you used to keep the children engaged? How do you know if they understand the story?

3. If you currently serve children who are dual language learners, how do you think they will respond to the strategies the authors present? If you don't currently serve this population, how do you think the strategies can support all children's language and literacy development?

Connect research and practice

1. What does the research cited in this article say about dual language learners' vocabulary development?

2. What do research findings show about the effects of using children’s home language to support their English vocabulary acquisition?

3. What do research findings show about effective ways of using storybook reading to promote young dual language learners’ vocabulary?

Action steps

Try out these ideas over the next 2 to 4 weeks. Document and discuss your experiences with others.

Implement and document

- 1. Meet, brainstorm, and revise.** Meet with other colleagues in a community of practice and plan a storybook reading activity using the strategies described in the article. Choose a volunteer in your group to try out the activity. Videotape or observe the volunteer implementing the activity plan. Then meet again as a group to discuss children’s behavior. Were the dual language learners engaged? Did they use the new core vocabulary later? Work together to revise the activity plan as needed.
- 2. Implement and observe.** Ask a colleague or parent volunteer to help you implement the revised activity in your classroom. Observe dual language learners’ behavior while the colleague/parent reads a book aloud in English and the home language. Ask children to retell the story using a flannel board with the story characters or ask them to draw the story and talk about it. If children are in the initial stages of second language acquisition, ask questions that allow them to point or give you nonverbal answers. (This will help you determine if the children understand the key points of the story even if they cannot verbalize them in English.)
- 3. Document.** Through journal entries, photographs, and observation records, keep track of what you do and how children respond. Did the children show their understanding of the main points of the story? How and when did they use some of the vocabulary in the book? In what contexts did they use the new words, such as during pretend play or outside time? How did the English-speaking children react to the storybook reading in another language?
- 4. Involve families.** Plan ways to engage parents, particularly those of dual language learners. For example, send children home with a Spanish version of the book, or invite parents to class so they can read it in their home languages (especially if you only speak English).

Discuss experiences and outcomes

Summarize your experiences and outcomes in the space provided, and then discuss them with at least one colleague/peer.

1. What did you do that was successful? How can you build on your progress?

2. What challenges did you face? How did you address the challenges?

3. Have you noticed changes in your program as a result of the new strategies? Did anything surprise you?

4. How can you build on your program’s progress?

Continue learning

Consult these resources to further build knowledge and skills related to the content of this article.

Early Childhood Learning and Knowledge Center, Office of Head Start. n.d. Dual Language Learners. <http://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/hslc/Dual%20Language%20Learners>

Hickman, P. & Pollard-Durodola, S. D. 2009. *Dynamic Read-Aloud Strategies for English Learners: Building Language and Literacy in the Primary Grades*. Newark, DE: International Reading Association.

Volk, D., & Long, S. 2005. “Challenging Myths of the Deficit Perspective. Honoring Children’s Literacy Resources.” *Young Children* 60 (6): 12–19.

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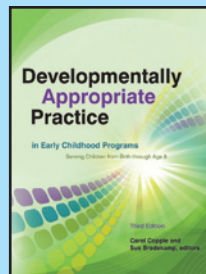
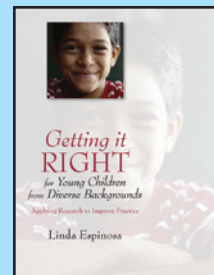
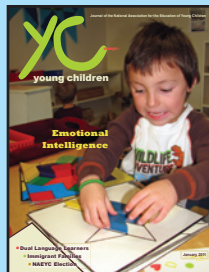
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