

# INCLUSION STRATEGIES & TOOLS

## COMMUNITY TIME GATHERING OR GROUP TIME



- Makes learning fun!
- Promotes a sense of belonging
- Builds connections
- Stimulates interest in different topics
- Can be planned or spontaneous



## PLANNING GROUP TIME

Try this tool:

Where	What	Who	When	How
Location (on the classroom carpet, at a table, in the gym, or cubby area)  Indoor and/or outdoor	Are the activities developmentally appropriate?  Educator expectations and limits	Groupings (dynamics, skills, size)  What is each team member's role and responsibility?	Scheduled or child-initiated.  How long?	Activities based on the children's interests  Will some of these expectations or activities not work for some children? If so why?  What alternative will be offered if a child does not wish to participate?

## CONSIDERATIONS

### PHYSICAL SPACE

- Choose a location where toys and activities that may distract are out of view.
- Ensure there is enough space. Consider using individual mats to help children identify where to sit.
- Offer alternative seating for children who need more movement or more support, such as a wiggle cushion, scoop chair or wobble stool.
- Consider having a bin of quiet fidget toys and including props in group time activities for children who attend better with something to hold.

### STRUCTURE & TRANSITIONS

- Prepare your activities and materials ahead of time.
- Provide a clear and consistent beginning and end to group time (e.g., visual sequence, song).
- Provide opportunities for repetition and practice.

### EDUCATOR RESPONSE

- Be engaging and fun. Limit academic expectations (numbers, letters, calendar etc.).
- Offer choices and value all children's contributions and individual communication style.
- Demonstrate flexibility. Adapt and accommodate to meet individual or group needs by changing or shortening activities as needed.

### PROGRAMMING

- Include a variety of both active and quiet activities. Invite children to move as needed!
- Consider how non-speaking children will participate (songs/activity choice board, sign language, gestures, etc.).
- Try sensory activities to support the engagement of all children (bubbles, scarves, parachute, ribbons sticks, shakers, etc.).
  - Choose activities for differing abilities, and learning styles. For example: Auditory (music, instruments and rhymes), Visual (books with props, puppets and felt stories), and Physical (action songs, dancing and follow the leader games).