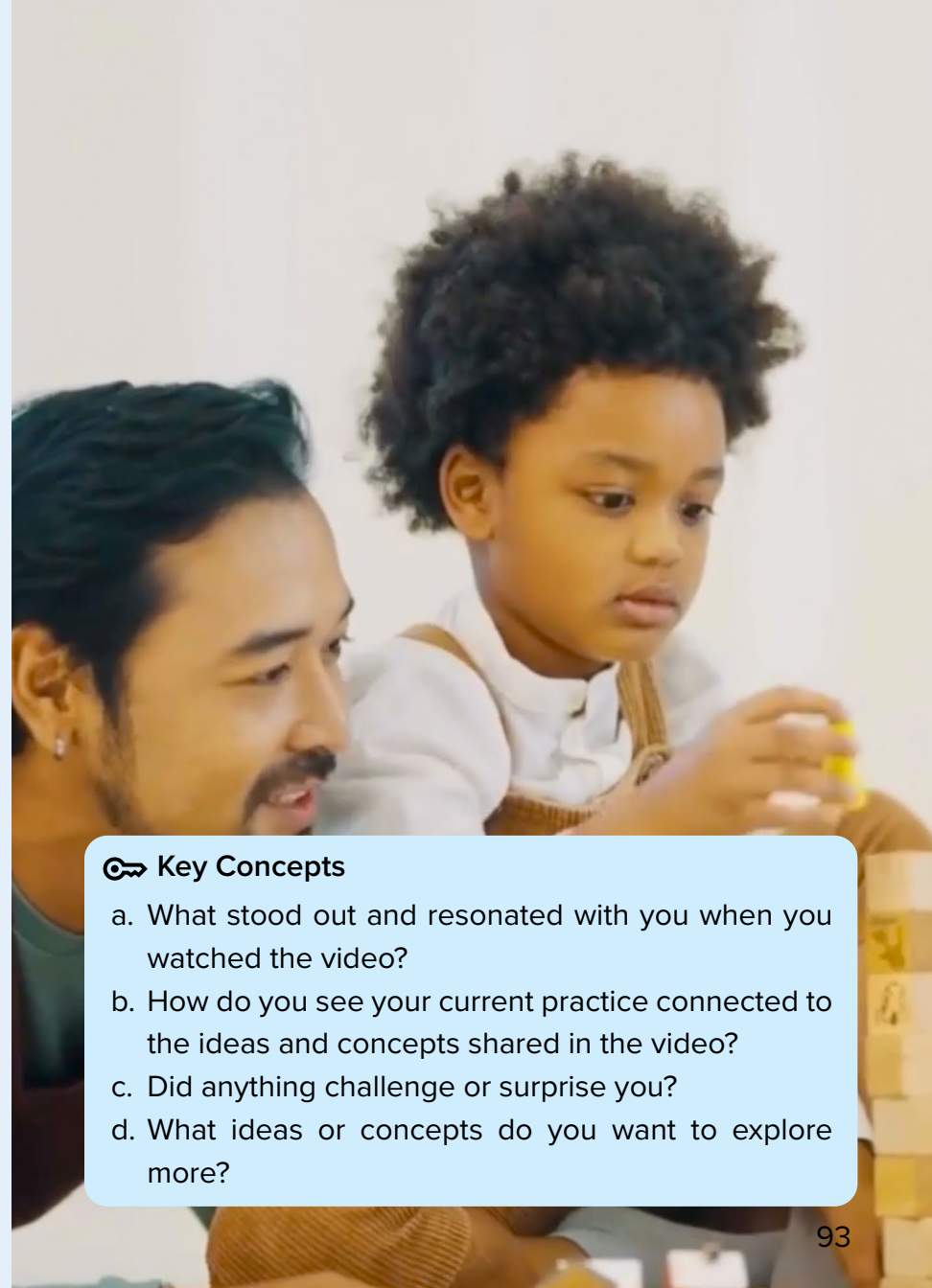


Module Six

Engaging Families

“There is no such thing as a perfect parent, so just be a real one.”

— Sue Atkins



Key Concepts

- a. What stood out and resonated with you when you watched the video?
- b. How do you see your current practice connected to the ideas and concepts shared in the video?
- c. Did anything challenge or surprise you?
- d. What ideas or concepts do you want to explore more?

Text Rendering

Take a minute to read the quote shown on the right together. Have each participant choose the following:

- a. A sentence that was meaningful to you and helped you gain a deeper understanding of the text.
- b. A phrase that moved, engaged, provoked or was in some way meaningful to you.
- c. A word that captured your attention or struck you as powerful.

Invite each participant to briefly share their responses to the group and explain why they selected the sentence, phrase and word that was chosen.

After each has shared, the group might consider the common themes that emerged from the conversation, and how the discussion deepened their understanding of IEYMH.

If you want to dig a little deeper with the group you may consider the following questions helpful.

- How does the text you selected connect to your values?
- What did you learn about yourself and others through this exercise?

“

Families often feel a strong pressure from the school system around numeracy and literacy. I believe what's really important is for early childhood educators to be able to articulate the importance of dispositions for learning rather than this building of skills and knowledge in early childhood. Dispositions like curiosity, optimism, problem solving, critical thinking. An ability to know how to build a relationship with another human being. That's the work of early childhood.

— Lorrie McGee

Deconstructing Big Ideas

- What comes to mind for you when you think about the idea that “we want families to have that feeling of belonging, that they get to bring their true selves to the program and that the program sees them and that they feel seen.
- What role do you play in creating that feeling for families? What intentional practices do you take up in your program or classroom?
- How do you know when your families have a true sense of belonging?

Close Read

Refer to the quote on the right

- What do you think Lorrie is speaking on when she says “What are we giving our attention to?”
- Consider your engagements with families, what are the stories that you share at the end of the day?
- How does your documentation bring visibility to what you want to grow?

Personal Writing

- Consider the relationships you have with families. How do you celebrate the uniqueness of families?
- How do you learn about the child in the content of family and community and make connections to care?

“

I think one of the most important things that we can do is we can think about what are the stories that we share with families about what happens in our programs every day? In our early on programs when we’re watching children alongside families we can pay attention to what we are noticing. What are we giving our attention to? Are we giving our attention to how children are showing empathy for one another, being kind to one another? Are we watching as children learn how to enter play with one another? And are we bringing visibility to that in alongside families? And if not side by side, in our documentation in the stories that we share with families. Families don’t really want to hear about the pincer grasp and about eye-hand coordination. They want to know who their child is. And they want to know that you know who their child is. And it’s those stories that are the most powerful.

— Lorrie McGee



🔍 Thinking Lens

- What captures your heart and mind as you look at this image?
- What do you notice about the relationships within the image?
- What perspectives are present in this moment?
- How does this image connect to your own values?

Final Word

- Invite each individual to write a short reflection of the big ideas that resonated with them in the video. What new understandings do they have? What questions are still lingering on their minds?
- Each participant then has the opportunity to present their reflection and shares with the group.
- The group then has a chance to ask probing and clarifying question and shares their thoughts.
- The presenter then responds to the discussion offering how the ideas and thoughts of others has influenced their thinking.
- Repeat the process for each member of the community of practice. (This is best done in groups of four or five).
- The group then considers the common threads and values that have been illuminated through the process.

Facilitator Final Thoughts and Reflections

- What practices have you been taking up that are impacting conversations differently than the first video?
- What have these experiences taught you about yourself?
- What do you take with you in your everyday practice?