

Systems Thinking and Individualization: *Individual Developmental Paths*

Use these ideas and questions to build on what you've learned and extend your practice.

THINK ABOUT IT!

■ Self-Reflection

Use these questions to think about your own practice.

■ Reflect with Others

Supervisors, directors, coaches, and teachers/providers can be reflective partners.

■ The Power of Practice

Invite a colleague to join you; observe or record each other and share ideas.

REFLECTIVE QUESTIONS

- How do I resist the urge to come to quick conclusions about children's behaviors?
- What challenges do I have in focusing on children's individual needs? How can I use systems thinking habits and tools to overcome these challenges?
- How can I use the systems thinking habits to increase my understanding of individual children?
- How do I use collaboration with families as a leverage point to support each child in my care?
- How can I use Behavior Over Time Graphs (BOTGs) to help myself and others learn about each child's individual developmental path?

TRY IT OUT!

Let's practice using systems thinking habits to support an individual child.

- Choose a child who demonstrates a behavior that you'd like to learn more about in order to provide individualized support.
- First, consider the child's behavior fully before coming to a conclusion.
 - What are some possible causes of the child's behavior?
 - How do you plan to gather more information from the child's family?
- Then, observe the child over a period of time, to identify any patterns about when and how frequently the behavior occurs.
- Finally, identify possible leverage actions.
 - What actions can you take to support this child?

How Did It Go?

In a journal or on a notepad or tablet, document examples of using the systems thinking habits over the course of a month. Reflect on the examples that you documented. What were the outcomes of using these habits? To what extent was using these habits helpful in providing individualized care to the child? How might you use these habits with other children in your setting?

What Next?

Try using these habits to better understand each of the children in your care. Practicing using the habits will help you provide individualized support to children. Check out the next pack in this bundle, *Building Collaborative Systems*, to learn about creating effective collaboration among education professionals, specialists, and family members to support children's individual learning needs.

The habits of a systems thinker are adapted from the work of the Waters Foundation. Systems Thinking in Schools, ©2014 Waters Foundation, www.watersfoundation.org.