

Spotlight on Serve and Return

Subject: Strengthen What You See – Serve & Return in Action

Now that you've completed the Parent-Child Interaction Observation training, this microlearning will help you apply what you learned in your daily practice.

Every back-and-forth moment between a caregiver and child builds brain connections and trust. These simple, shared exchanges—eye contact, gestures, smiles—are the foundation of healthy social and emotional development.

LOOK FOR:

Eye contact and shared sounds or gestures.



Smiles, soothing touch, or gentle talk from the caregiver.



The child's response—calming, cooing, or leaning in.



PRACTICE TIP:

During your next visit, observe one brief Serve and Return moment and share it with the parent:

“When you smiled and he reached for your face, you both lit up—that’s a beautiful moment of connection.”

Highlighting these moments helps parents see the powerful ways they already support their child’s development.

RESOURCE:

For further information on serve and return watch

Harvard’s Serve and return video

with parents. Take time to discuss.

