Coaching Strategies Used During
Focused Observations

1. Observed live:

While observing, the coach takes notes about the early interventionist's guidance of families to implement Pyramid Model practices and watches the interactions and use of practices with the family without using any other coaching strategies. Live observation is scheduled to offer observation of activities when the practitioner will be implementing action plan goals or practices.

Example: The coach sits down or stands in a place where she/he can observe the early interventionist's implementation of practices and take notes based on the action plan goals.

2. View Video Recording:

Coach views video of the early interventionist engaged in coaching a family member. The video observation can be incorporated into reflection and feedback conversations, as the coach can use the video to share specific examples of the Pyramid Model practices related to the action plan.

Example: The coach views video provided by the early interventionist with the focus of the camera on the early interventionist. The coach watches video to note strengths in implementing Pyramid practices in interactions with the family and to identify opportunities for strengthening Pyramid practice implementation.

3. Modeled:

Verbal, gestural, physical or signed actions that demonstrates how to implement a Pyramid Model practice. In a modeling situation, the coach has a conversation with the family to demonstrate a practice or models a child intervention practice for the early interventionist and family. Coaches should only use modeling if there is an agreement with the early interventionist or family to do so.

Example: Coach demonstrates how to use a visual schedule by working with a child during an activity, routine or transition. Coach demonstrates how to ask the family member about the child's self-regulation behavior during stressful routines.

1   Sources
     Snyder, P. (2009) Coaching Manual for Embedded Instruction for Early Learning: Tools for Teachers (TfT). Gainesville, Florida: University of Florida. Hemmeter, M.L., Kinder, K., Artman, K., Snyder, P., & Fox, L., (2009). Coaching Manual for Classroom-Wide Implementation of the Pyramid Model. Nashville, TN: Vanderbilt University.

4. Collected Data:

While observing, the coach records data regarding implementation of a Pyramid Model Practice or specific action plan step. These data might come from the use of the Early Interventionist Pyramid Practices Fidelity Instrument (EIPPFI) or by recording data (frequency count, duration) that are related to the action plan goal. Coaches should only collect data in this manner after having a discussion with the early interventionist that data will be collected and shared as part of the coaching process. After data are collected, the coach might use graphs to summarize the data to help the early interventionist quickly identify trends in improvement or identify areas that need additional support. Additionally, a review of the data might be used during debriefing sessions to revise or add supports to the action plan.

Example: To collect data regarding progress towards a newly developed action plan, the coach adds observations to a completed EIPPFI and provides feedback on growth in practices during the debriefing session. Other examples of data collection include tallying the total number of times the early interventionist directs interactions to the child versus the family member or recording the number of jargon words that are used in conversations with the family.

5. Verbal Support:

Verbal support provided by the coach to the early interventionist about implementation of Pyramid Model practices while the early interventionist is implementing practices with the family. Coach delivers verbal prompts or cues to remind the early interventionist to use specific practice. Verbal support differs from modeling in that the coach's comment is directed to the early interventionist.

Example: The early interventionist wants the interpreter to describe a communication strategy for the parent to try with the child. The coach says to the early interventionist "Before you describe the strategy, let the interpreter know that you are seeking to find out what strategy might fit best with how the caregiver wants the child to make requests during meals."

6. Side-by-Side Gestural Support:

Nonverbal or visual actions used by the coach to guide the early interventionist's implementation of Pyramid Model practices. The action might be used to acknowledge the appropriate implementation of a practice or to prompt/remind the early interventionist to use a particular practice.

Example: Side-by-side gestural support can be as simple as the coach nodding her head to confirm the early interventionist's successful delivery of a Pyramid Model practice.

7. Supportive Feedback:

Coach notes an important use of a practice or improvement on a strategy and provides feedack to the early interventionist.

Example: The coach notes that the practitioner has provided the parent with strategies to promote dyadic interactions with her child and says to the practitioner "This is going so well, I think we are all learning about what works to keep Kyla engaged."

8. **Helped with Environmental Arrangements:**

   Coach assists the early interventionist with creating or adapting the environment to support the implementation of Pyramid practices by the caregiver.

   Example: The coach might help the early interventionist help the caregiver arrange a visual schedule to make it more functional or reposition the child to facilitate participation in an activity or interaction.

9. **Other Help during the Home Visit:**

   Doing other things during the home visit that are not related to the implementation of Pyramid Model practices but help to establish the coach/practitioner relationship.

   Example: Helping to organize notes, interacting with siblings, picking up materials while the early interventionist talks with the family.

Types of Coaching Strategies Used During
Debriefing Meetings

1. **Problem-Solving Discussion:**

   Verbal interaction between the coach and early interventionist designed to lead the practitioner through a systematic process involving identifying an implementation issue, generating options to address the issue, deciding on a possible course of action to address the issue, implementing the course of action, and evaluating the results.

   Example: After observing a specific event/situation, the coach has a discussion with the early interventionist about his/her implementation of a practice. The early interventionist and the coach identify that the early interventionist is hesitant to address the caregiver's use of harsh reprimands (the issue). The coach and early interventionist generate potential solutions to address the issue, discuss a course of action to be taken, and agree to evaluate results, often as part of the next coaching session.

2. **Reflective Conversation:**

   A verbal interaction that includes a brief exchange between the coach and early interventionist and that is focused on reflection (e.g., how do you think it went? What additional support do you need?). The goal is to encourage the early interventionist to think about his/her actions, the situation, the practices he/she used, the responses of the caregiver and/or the early interventionist's comfort level regarding implementation of Pyramid Model practices. No constructive or directive statements are used. Instead the coach offers a question to encourage reflection (i.e., "How do you think the caregiver would respond if you describe the strategies you observed her using that helped the child stay engaged in the interaction?"). Reflective conversation can focus on perspectives, feelings, interpretations, or use of practices.

   Example: During a debriefing, the coach might offer the following:
   - "Let's talk about what happened when you tried to show the parent how to use the visual schedule. Why do you think she responded that way?"
   - "Why do you think the parent did not respond to your questions about how the child is responding to the new bedtime routine. What do you think is going on?"

3. Video Review:

Video review includes the coach and practitioner viewing the observation video together. During video review, the coach guides reflection, identifies strengths (supportive feedback) and discusses areas of improvement (constructive feedback). During video review, many of the other coaching practices might be used (e.g., supportive feedback, problem-solving discussion).

Examples: The early interventionist provided the coach with a video from a home visit with a family. The video showed interactions between the early interventionist and mother while the mother was feeding her 18 month old and the transition from lunch to nap. The early interventionist has been working on engaging caregivers in collaborative problem-solving related to caregiver child interactions and the child's social emotional competence. The coach views the video and identifies a clip where the practitioner guided the caregiver to identify the child's signals that she was "all done" with eating and how to support the child when she became distressed during lunch. The coach will share that clip and provide descriptive feedback on the use of the practice. The coach also identifies a portion of the video, when the child is resistive when transitioning to a nap. The coach notes that she will discuss that part of the video with practitioner to explore how the practitioner might guide the parent in a collaborative problem solving discussion.

4. Role Play:

A simulated situation that occurs between the coach and early interventionist to help the early interventionist to learn or practice how they will support the caregiver during debriefing. In a role-playing situation, both individuals take on a defined role and implement.

Example: The early interventionist and coach might practice a hypothetical conversation with a parent during a role play.

5. Constructive Feedback:

Coach describes what occurred during the observation and provides precise feedback that assists the early interventionist in understanding missed components in the action plan steps or how to improve a targeted Pyramid Model practice. Use of constructive feedback provides the early interventionist with objective and specific information on how to make improvements with a practice or activity. As in the use of supportive feedback, constructive feedback might incorporate use of data, graphs, and video recordings.

Example: The coach reviews a video with the practitioner and identifies some missed opportunities where the practice in the action plan might be used. The coach and practitioner view the video together. The coach pauses the video and asks the practitioner to reflect how the targeted practice might be used with the family at the identified point in the video.

6. Goal Setting/Action Planning:

The coach helps the early interventionist identify and write goals related to action planning. Goal setting takes place any time a new goal is developed or new strategies/ action steps are added to an existing goal. To score this coaching strategy category in the coaching log, a new goal must be written OR a revision must be made to an existing Action Plan (e.g., adding new resources needed, updating the timeline, adding an Action Step).

7. Supportive Feedback:

Coach describes what occurred during the observation, focusing on use of specific encouragement to the early interventionist to report strengths, note improvements in practice implementation, or highlight accomplishments. This type of feedback connects the observation with the action plan, providing the early interventionist with concrete evidence of the progress he/she is making. Supportive feedback might incorporate use of data, graphs, and video recordings.

Example: The coach might say "I heard you ask the caregiver reflective questions to help her identify the strategy of providing choices as something to try during transitions instead of providing the strategy yourself. Way to go!" Another example might be that the coach says "I noticed you positioned yourself on the other side of the caregiver to encourage more interaction between the caregiver and the child. That was great thinking on your feet!"

8. Resource Sharing:

Coach offers additional items or resources that might help the early interventionist learn more about Pyramid Model practices and other recommended practices for supporting the family.

Example: The coach might suggest the early interventionist read journal articles or book chapters that have information about the Pyramid Model, family support, or social emotional development.

9. Demonstration:

Demonstration-Live:

The coach shows or physically performs an action that demonstrates how to implement Pyramid Model practices for the early interventionist. In a demonstration, the coach enacts the early interventionist's role and provides an example of how to use specific Pyramid Model practice. This practice is used rarely and only with permission of the early interventionist and family.

Example: The coach helps guide the parent in labeling the child's emotions during a play routine.

Demonstration-Video:

Watching a short audiovisual clip that focuses on family support strategies or Pyramid Model practices.

Example: The coach and early interventionist might view a video from another source that offers an illustration of a early interventionist guiding a family member to reflect on her confidence and competence within an activity with her child.

10. Child Intervention Strategies:

Coach assists the early interventionist with planning for intervention strategies to use with the child.

Example: The coach assists the early interventionist in developing a social story for the family to use to prepare the child for going grocery shopping.