**Lesson 1: Introduction**

**Early Child Contingency Learning- Script**

*Slide 1:*

*Narrator:* Welcome to early child contingency learning for promoting infant and toddler competence. This e-learning lesson includes different types of games, experiences, and opportunities for engaging young children in interactions with adults and materials where a reinforcing or interesting response from the adults and materials is dependent upon a child’s behavior or actions. This type of learning is one of the earliest child accomplishments that involves a child’s ability to have control over events in his or her life.

*Slide 2:*

*Narrator:* The term contingency refers to the relationship between a child’s behavior or actions and the consequence of those behavior or actions. The child does something and something interesting or positive happens in response to the child’s behavior or actions.

*Slide 3:*

*Narrator:* Different terms are often used to describe early contingency learning. These include: Cause Effect Learning, Response Contingent Learning, Contingent responsiveness, Contingent Stimulation, and Infant Conditioning. They all refer to the same type of child learning. A reinforcing, or interesting, response from an adult or a material is dependent on the child’s behavior or actions. Let’s look at a couple of examples of child contingency learning.

*Slide 4:*

*Narrator:* One example of this type of learning occurs every day for every infant during feeding episodes. Whether bottle or breast fed, an infant’s access to milk is dependent upon a sucking action. And most parents will tell you infants do not take long to become proficient at this type of behavior.

*Slide 5:*

*Narrator:* Here is another example of an early childhood contingency learning experience. Many young children are exposed to mobiles either in their cribs or while lying on the floor. It is not unusual for a child to make random arm or leg movements that cause the mobile to move or make some type of sound. It does not take long for a child to make the connection between acting on the mobile to produce movement and sounds.

*Slide 6:*

*Narrator:* One more example should help make clear the key features of early child contingency learning. Parents delight in their infants looking at them while holding or cuddling their children. Almost all the time, parents and other adults respond to a child’s visual attention by talking, smiling, and touching their child as a sign of acknowledging the child’s behavior. The more this type of interaction occurs, the more a child comes to learn that looking at mom or dad results in reinforcing or pleasant responses.

*Slide 7:*

*Narrator:* Before we go on to the next step, let’s look at our three examples to better understand child contingency learning. In each of these contingency learning experiences, the reinforcing or interesting responses are dependent, or contingent, upon a child’s behavior or actions.

*Slide 8:*

*Narrator:* How do we know that a child has made the connection between his or her behavior or actions, and the consequences of those behavior or actions? You look for two things- increases in the number of child behavior if the child’s behavior or actions result in interesting or reinforcing consequences, increases in child social/ emotional behavior like smiling or laughter as an indicator of a child’s recognition of the connection between what he or she does, and what happens as a result of his or her behavior.

*Slide 9:*

*Narrator:* A child’s recognition of the connection between his or her behavior, and the consequences of the behavior, is called contingency detection; or contingency awareness. This recognition is one of the first signs of a child’s cognitive mastery.

*Slide 10:*

*Narrator:* Let’s take a look at some video examples of what occurs when a child recognizes that his or her behavior or actions cause someone to act or something to happen in response to those behavior or actions.

*Video embedded in slide:*

(Audio: Text on screen describing what is happening in video)

*Slide 11:*

*Narrator:* What are the benefits or outcomes that can be expected as a result of early child contingency learning games where children learn the connection between what they do, and what happens in response? Both research and practice show that contingency games increase child interactions with people and materials, promote a child’s sustained efforts to produce interesting or reinforcing effects, increase child vocalizations and social emotional behaviors like smiling and laughter.

*Slide 12:*

*Narrator:* Early contingency learning games are one-way young children can learn the connection between their own behavior and its consequences. Children learn that they can make interesting things happen. Check out lesson 2 in this e-learning series to find examples of the particular strategies to implement this practice.

**Lesson 2: Practice Illustrations**

**Strategies for Promoting Young Children’s Contingency Learning- Script**

*Slide 1:*

*Narrator:* Welcome to lesson 2 of the ECPC E-learning lessons on early child contingency learning: strategies for promoting young children’s contingency learning. Recall in lesson 1, you learned that contingency learning games involve a reinforcing or interesting consequence that is dependent or contingent upon a child’s behavior or actions. In this lesson, we’ll use a performance checklist and practice illustrations to explore strategies for promoting young children’s connection between their actions and what happens in response.

*Slide 2:*

*Narrator:* The early child contingency learning checklist includes the practices used to promote children’s early contingency learning. Review these checklist indicators and download the checklist here to use in this lesson and in lesson 3. Let’s look at these practices more closely.

*Slide 3:*

Narrator: Start by observing the child in different activities to identify behavior that the child is able to do. Pay attention to both social and non-social behavior, to behavior that appear to be intentional, and to subtle or unintentional behavior the child produces. One way to structure an observation is to use this observation tool, the child behavior observation rating scale, you can download from this page.

*Slide 4:*

Narrator: Another way to learn about behavior a child is able to do is to talk with parents or others who know the child well. The kinds of questions shown on this page are useful for helping parents describe a child’s abilities.

*Slide 5:*

*Narrator:* You also should identify the child’s interests and preferences. That is, the kinds of things the child enjoys, and the things that capture and maintain the child’s attention. Use the link provided on this page to download the child interest and preference indicators tool for identifying things that the child enjoys, and that capture and maintain the child’s attention.

*Slide 6:*

*Narrator:* Next, you want to develop learning games where a child uses a particular behavior resulting in an interesting consequence. On this video, pay particular attention to how behavior that each child is able to do is paired with a reinforcer or consequence that is especially interesting to the child. Use the link provided on this page to download a useful tool for developing contingency learning games.

*Video embedded in slide*

-Behavior: Child Lifts Head

-Reinforcer: Parent pats her back

-Behavior: Child moves arms

-Reinforcer: Items make sounds

-Behavior: Child pushes with hand

-Reinforcer/Consequence: Toy vibrates and lights up

Parent in Background: “Good Job!!” (after child lights up toy) “Good job! What is that!”

-Behavior: Child looks up

-Reinforcer/Consequence: Mom tickles him

(Child looks up)

*Mom:* “ohhh you got me!!! Good job” (tickles child)

(Child looks up)

*Mom*: (squealing) Ah! You got me!” (tickles child)

(Child looks up)

*Mom:* You got me!! (tickles child)

*Slide 7:*

*Narrator:* In this video, the mother engages her son in a peek-a-boo game. Consider other contexts in which the game could be played. For example, while putting on a shirt in the morning, playing with a napkin after a meal, or snuggling with a blanket before naptime.

*Video embedded in slide:*

*Mom:* (pulling cloth down in front of her face) peek a boo!

*Child:* Laughing, giggling, touching cloth in between him and mother

*Mom:* (pulling cloth down in front of her face) peek-a-boo!

*Child:* Laughing, giggling, touching cloth in between him and mother

*Mom:* (pulling cloth down in front of her face) Peek-a-boo!

*Child:* Laughing, giggling, touching cloth in between him and mother

*Mom:* (pulling cloth down in front of her face) Peek-a-boo!

*Slide 8:*

*Narrator:* In this video, the child kicks to get the parent to push the swing. Notice the multiple opportunities for the child to produce the consequence as long as the child wants to continue the game.

*Video embedded in slide:*

*Mom:* (pushing child in swing) “Alright lets go! Woah! A brrrr, ahhhh”

*Child:* (kicks legs)

*Mom:* “Alright, here we go! Ahh! Wheee! Wheee! Boop!”

*Child:* (kicks legs)

*Mom:* “Okay! We’re swinging!”

*Slide 9:*

Narrator: In this video, notice how the parent responds immediately by imitating the child; letting the child know that his vocalizations get the parent to interact with him.

*Child:* (Vocalization)

*Mom:* (imitates child vocalization, adds additional vocalization)

*Child:* (looks at mom, vocalization)

*Mom* (imitates child vocalization)

*Child:* (vocalization)

*Mom:* imitates child vocalization

*Child:* vocalization

*Mom*: vocalization

*Slide 10:*

*Narrator:* Finally, you want to be sure to help the child maintain the behavior, making the interesting consequence happen. Once the child has made the connection between his own behavior and the consequence, provide the consequence on an irregular basis rather than each time the child produces the behavior. This will get the child to try more to get the interesting response. After playing a game of peek-a-boo with her son, Jackson, for several weeks, Mila saw that he had become an expert at getting a peek-a-boo surprise when he made a short vocalization. She decided to keep Jackson interested by waiting for him to vocalize more than just once before giving him the surprise. Jackson worked even harder to get the surprise, and soon was using more vocalizations in the game.

*Slide 11*

*Narrator:* The Early Child Contingency Learning Checklist is useful as a guide for planning and evaluating on the use of the contingency learning games. Refer to the early child contingency learning practice guide to find suggestions for other ways you can get experience with these practices. Next, complete lesson 3: Mastering Contingency Learning Practices, to deepen your understanding of the practices.

**Lesson 3: Implementation Activities**

**Mastering Early Contingency Learning Practices: Script**

*Slide 1:*

Narrator: Welcome to lesson 3 of the ECPC E-Learning lessons on early child contingency learning: Mastering the use of early contingency learning practices. In this E-learning lesson, you will complete a number of exercises involving the development and implementation of early child contingency learning games.

*Slide 2:*

*Narrator:* Start by reviewing the early child contingency learning checklist that was used in lesson 2. Recall that the checklist indicator includes the practices that can be used to promote children’s contingency learning. Download the checklist and use it to guide your work throughout this lesson.

*Slide 3:*

*Narrator:* Suppose that you have a curious colleague, who wants to know what you have studied about early child contingency learning. For this first exercise, you will gather information you can use to prepare a response for describing and explaining the characteristics and benefits of early contingency learning.

*Slide 4:*

*Narrator:* Watch this video of a parent, who is an expert on playing contingency learning games with her son. Pay particular attention to what the parent says about early contingency learning.

*Video embedded in slide:*

(Inaudible vocalizations, text on screen describing what is happening in the video)

*Slide 5:*

*Narrator*: Next, examine these different resources to increase your understanding and ability to describe the characteristics, importance, and benefits of early child contingency learning practices.

*Slide 6:*

*Narrator:* Use the information you gathered from all of the sources to develop a response to your colleagues’ question. Then, practice your explanation with a peer or colleague, and ask for feedback on your ability to describe the characteristics of early child contingency learning, and the benefits for young children.

*Slide 7:*

*Narrator:* Next, you will want to practice developing early contingency learning games. Suppose you have been working with Mazie, and her mother Lisette, for the last several weeks. You observe that Mazie does not usually use behaviors to make other things happen. You want to help Lisette learn to play contingency learning games with Mazie

*Slide 8:*

*Narrator:* First, you want to help Lisette identify behavior that Mazie can use in different learning games. Watch this video of Mazie and her mother. Use the child behavior observation rating scale which you can download here, to identify behavior that Mazie is able to produce.

*Video embedded in slide:*

*Mom:* (whispering to child as child examines drum, demonstrates how to use drum)

*Mom*: (as child examines blocks) “oh you’re going to get that! Woah, good job!

*Mom*: (as child plays with blocks) Ohh! Good job!

*Child:* (playing with blocks)

*Mom:* Good job, good job!

*Mom:* Good job!

*Child:* vocalizations

*Mom:* mmhmm

*Mom*: demonstrating how to use blocks

*Child:* examining blocks

*Child:* (standing as mom is holding her)

*Mom:* Okay!

*Mom:* (holding child, lauging), “Sounds like you want to!” (daughter looks at finger) “Ha! That was a short look. You have to look right at me! Look right at me! Can I have a kiss?”

*Slide 9:*

*Narrator:* Compare your observation to the behavior identified in this video. What other behavior did you notice Mazie produce?

*Video embedded in slide:*

Mom talking to child, (text on screen describing what is happening in video)

*Slide 10:*

*Narrator:* Next, you want to identify what could be used as child specific reinforcers in the learning games you develop. This list describes ways Mazie indicates her reactions to different objects, activities, events, and people in everyday activities. Based on this information, develop a list of Mazie’s interests, and potential reinforcers to use for Mazie’s contingency learning games. Download the child interest and preference indicators tool to use as you identify potential reinforcers for Mazie.

*Slide 11:*

*Narrator:* Finally, use what you have learned about Mazie’s abilities and interests to develop at least 3 learning games that will help Mazie learn how she can use her behavior to make things happen. Download the My Child’s Learning Activities planning tool to help you develop the games. Describe the child behavior and interesting consequence for the game, how the game will be played, the supports and accommodations that will make the game possible for Mazie, and the different contexts where the game could be played.

*Slide 12:*

*Narrator:* Once different games are developed for a child; they need to be implemented in a way that the child is successful using behavior to produce an interesting response. In this video, Justin’s mom, Brenda, is working very hard to get him to play the games, but the games are not going so well. As you watch the examples of Justin’s games, use the early child contingency learning checklist to examine what is going well in each game, what is not going well, and how the game could be changed to make it more successful.

*Video embedded in slide:*

(Mom talking to child, text describing what is happening in video)

*Slide 13:*

*Narrator:* Work with a peer or colleague to determine what you could do to help Brenda modify the games, or develop new ones, so Justin can be more successful. Consider the characteristics of the games, how the different game characteristics influence the success of the games, and what should be done to make the games more successful.

*Slide 14:*

*Narrator:* Once you have completed all three of the previous exercises, use the early child contingency learning checklist to examine all of the practices you have done, determine the extent to which your practices were consistent or inconsistent with each of the checklist indicators and why. Consider whether you could have done anything differently to make your practices better match the checklist indicators.

*Slide 15:*

*Narrator:* After examining your practices using the early child contingency learning checklist, try completing these additional activities to improve your understanding and abilities to use early learning contingency practices.

*Slide 16:*

*Narrator:* Also, continue to gather information about early child contingency learning. Spend time studying these, and the other resources provided throughout this lesson to learn more about early child contingency learning practices. Continue to use the practices in your work with young children and their families.