



# Deep and Simple Interactions in Out-of-School Virtual Programming

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# FRED ROGERS CENTER

Staying true to the vision of Fred Rogers, we help children grow as confident, competent, and caring human beings.

↓ EXPLORE



Deep and simple  
is far more essential  
than shallow and complex.

*Fred Rogers*



Three ideas...

1.

Having At Least One Matters

# SUPPORTIVE RELATIONSHIPS

Decades of research in the behavioral and social sciences have produced a rich knowledge base about resilience ...the single most common finding is that children who end up doing well have had at least one stable and committed relationship with a supportive parent, caregiver, or other adult.



Human relationships are primary in all of living. When the gusty winds blow and shake our lives, if we know that people care about us, we may bend with the wind . . . but we won't break.

*Fred Rogers*



2.

The Power of Human Relationships  
Comes from Simple, Ordinary Moments

The longer I live, the more  
convinced I am that the important  
moments of life rarely happen  
center stage ...

... what truly nourishes our hearts  
and changes our being are most  
often far from the spotlight.

Fred Rogers' Speech (1997) for the  
Association of Oncology Social Work

simple  
interactions  
building blocks of  
relationships

# CONNECTION





CONNECTION RECIPROcity



CONNECTION

RECIPROCALITY

INCLUSION



CONNECTION

RECIPROCITY

INCLUSION

OPPORTUNITY  
TO GROW

# www.simpleinteractions.org



## SIMPLE INTERACTIONS

A STRENGTHS-BASED, PRACTICE-BASED, AND COMMUNITY-BASED APPROACH TO IMPROVE PROGRAM QUALITY WITH HELPERS WHO SERVE CHILDREN, YOUTH, AND FAMILIES.

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**SIMPLE INTERACTIONS TOOL**  
Noticing and Appreciating Human Interactions Across Developmental Settings

**CONNECTION:** Interacting with mutually positive or appropriate emotions

- negative/hostile
- indifferent/detached
- mismatched
- mutually present in tune

**RECIPROCALITY:** Balancing roles of engagement during joint activity

- one-sided control with assistance or disengagement
- one-sided control with compliance
- two-way "serve and return"

**INCLUSION:** Inviting and including the least likely or least able to engage

- excluded
- at tended to separately
- invited and included

**OPPORTUNITY TO GROW:** Presenting incremental challenge and matching with appropriate support

- unrealistic or undemanding expectations
- incremental challenge with scaffolding
- scaffolding and fading

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How do we have *interactions*  
and build *relationships*  
online?

Although children's "outsides" may have changed a lot over the years, their inner needs have remained very much the same. Society seems to be pushing children to grow faster, but their developmental tasks have remained constant. No matter what lies ahead, children always need to know that they are loved and capable of loving. Anything that adults can do to help in this discovery will be our greatest gift to the future.

*Fred Rogers*

Let's Take a Minute to Think ...

What has **changed** in the ways you support children and families?

What has **remained the same**?



3.

Humans give meaning to technology

The main question is not so much how the new technology can help students learn. Rather, it's what will they do with what they learn?  
...Only real human beings can help them know the difference - regardless of the medium or the technology used for communication.

*Fred Rogers*

Think about your virtual programming...

What strategies have you used in your virtual programs to **build relationships**?

What do **meaningful interactions** look like online?



Final Thought:  
We Don't Have To Be Perfect  
To Be Helpful

Parents (or educators) can set the example by just being themselves rather than trying to be perfect parents (or educators) ...

There were times when I couldn't be with our sons, or when I couldn't give them undivided attention. I've realized that **everything does not have to be perfect in order to be effective.**

*Fred Rogers*

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is far more essential  
than shallow and complex.

*Fred Rogers*

**Thank you!**

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