



The National Center on Quality Teaching and Learning

## Presenter Notes

*Zoning: Staffing to Maximize Learning*



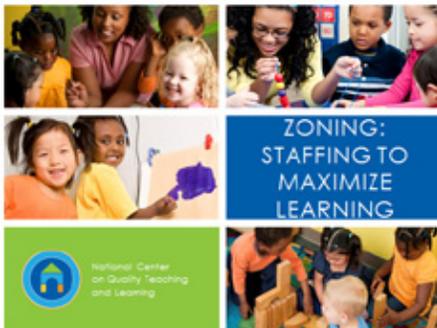
This guide walks you through presenting the *Zoning: Staffing to Maximize Learning* in-service. This in-service includes PowerPoint slides and supporting materials.

### Materials Needed:

- Presenter’s PowerPoint slides (18)
- Projector and audio equipment
- Learning Activity 1: Discussion Questions
- Learning Activity 2: Classroom Map
- Learning Activity 3: Staff Zoning Chart
- Tips for Teachers
- Tools for Supervisors
- Helpful Resources List

#### Icon Key:

-  Video
-  Activity
-  Discussion
-  Handout
-  Helpful Resource

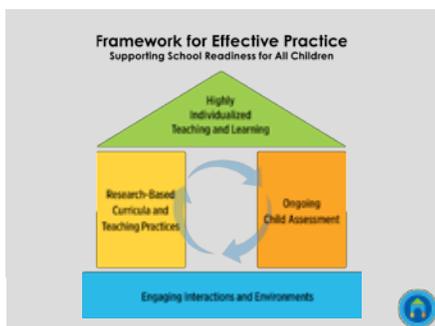


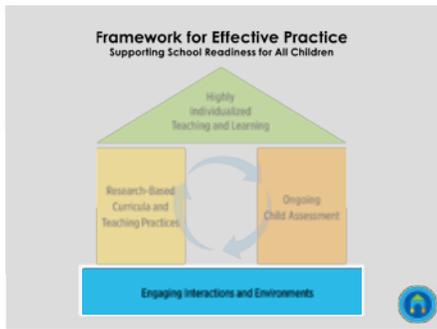
### Slide 1: Zoning: Staffing to Maximize Learning

- Welcome participants.
- Introduce topic: This presentation is about how to organize classroom staff in order to maximize learning for children.
- We will focus specifically on zoning, a practice commonly used to organize classroom staff.
- Zoning is a systematic way for a lead teacher to:
  - Maximize child engagement.
  - Organize staff members in the classroom in a more efficient manner and establish an organized and effective classroom environment.

### Slide 2: Framework for Effective Practice

- Review NCQTL framework:
  - The foundation represents effective and engaging interactions and environments;
  - The pillars represent research-based curricula and teaching practices and ongoing child assessment;
  - The roof represents highly individualized teaching and learning.





### Slide 3: House Foundation

- Relation to zoning:
  - One feature of the foundation of the house is a well-organized classroom where the effective management of staff occurs.
  - Zoning is a practice for effectively managing staff and staff tasks.

**OBJECTIVES**

- To understand what zoning is
- To learn the different types of zoning
- To understand the benefits of zoning in the classroom

### Slide 4: Objectives

Outline objectives for the presentation:

1. To understand what zoning is.
2. To learn about the different types of zoning and how they can be used in the classroom.
3. To highlight the benefits of zoning in the classroom and share some common problems and solutions related to zoning.

**WHAT IS ZONING?**

- Zoning is an effective practice used to help children stay engaged
- Zoning is a tool used to organize classroom staff

### Slide 5: What is Zoning?

- Zoning is an effective practice used to help children be active participants in the classroom activities. This is also called engagement.
- Organizes classroom staff by assigning specific roles and duties for the day.
- Decreases the amount of time children wait between activities.

**WHY USE ZONING?**

- Zoning can increase engagement behaviors
- Zoning can increase staff efficiency
- Zoning helps build confidence in preschool staff
- Zoning is flexible and can help make communication between staff members easier

HEWLETT, S.A. & STINE, S.J. (2010). Engagement practices in the preschool classroom. Baltimore, MD: Paul H. Broderick Publishing, LLC.

### Slide 6: Why Use Zoning?

**Benefits:**

- All team members know where they should be and what they should be doing. Children are not left to wait while the adults try to organize their roles.
- Staff can work more efficiently as a team when everyone knows where they need to be and who handles any unexpected events.
- Each staff member sees that they have a vital role in the running of the classroom.

**IMPORTANT NOTE:**

Zoning is never meant to feel restricting or something that should be “set in stone”. Unexpected events happen in preschool classrooms that create a need for spontaneous changes or temporary shifts in teacher responsibilities.

Having a specific zoning schedule in place makes it easier for classroom staff to communicate immediate needs and to then get back on track after unexpected events are over.

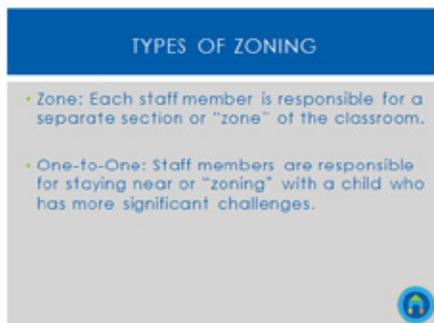
## Learning Activity: Discussion Questions

Set-up the activity by having the group break into classroom teams or small groups. Have participants discuss the following questions and be prepared to share back with the larger group some of key discussion points. It might be helpful to have one person record the answers on a large sheet of paper for everyone to view.

1. Describe how you see children interacting with each other and materials in your classroom. What times of day are the children most engaged? What times of day are challenging?
2. Describe what "setting-up for circle" means in your classroom. This can lead to discussing what each "job" in the classroom actually entails so that all staff members are clear about the duties that go along with each assigned activity of the day.
3. How does your classroom staff currently assign roles and plan activities? What works well? What challenges do you face?
4. How will zoning benefit your classroom?

### Highlight

- Zoning helps clarify staff roles and responsibilities

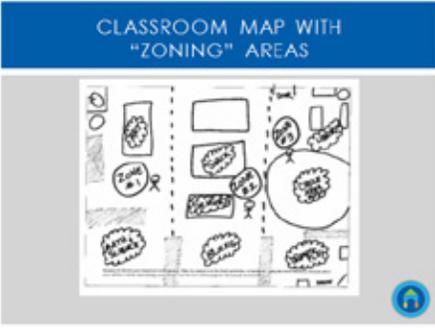


**TYPES OF ZONING**

- **Zone:** Each staff member is responsible for a separate section or "zone" of the classroom.
- **One-to-One:** Staff members are responsible for staying near or "zoning" with a child who has more significant challenges.

### Slide 7: Types of Zoning

1. **Zone:** Teachers are assigned to specific areas and tasks in the classroom and they spread out across the room or outside play area to their assigned areas.
2. **One-to-one:** One teacher is responsible for shadowing one student throughout the day. This situation might be used when a new student joins the class and needs some extra attention to learn the routine, or when a student who has the potential to become aggressive with other students needs a teacher close by.
  - Some classrooms will use a combination of these zoning types, depending on the immediate needs of the classroom climate.
  - This presentation focuses on zone zoning.



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## Slide 8: Classroom Map with “Zoning” Areas

D Introduce the Zoning Map by asking participants to describe each zone.

- How many zones?
- What is each teacher responsible for?

Key information to highlight or add to participants' discussion:

- The teacher assigned to zone 1 is responsible for the art table and the math and science area. This teacher remains in this area, and goes back-and-forth between the two learning centers, supporting children's play.
- Zone 2 has a teacher assigned to the blocks and sand and water table. This person moves back-and-forth between the sensory table and the block area to interact with the children.
- Zone 3 covers the dramatic play or house area, as well as the library corner. A teacher in this zone supports children in the dramatic play area, while periodically checking in with the children in the library area.

### IMPORTANT NOTE:

Teachers are the ones who stay in their zones, while the children are free to explore the entire classroom.

Make these additional points:

- Planning for classroom zoning encourages the teachers to think about how the physical classroom is arranged. It provides an opportunity for staff to evaluate the balance of activities. For example, dramatic play can be a busy, high need area so it's good to have a more child-independent area such as the library in the same zone.
- Often classrooms will first use a zoning plan during learning center time, but the full benefits of zoning really come from using this strategy throughout the entire day during all classroom activities and transitions.

STAFF SCHEDULE			
Activities/Transitions	Staff Person A	Staff Person B	Staff Person C
Arrival	Greet children and parents	Help children put away backpacks	Get tables ready for breakfast
Breakfast	At red table	At blue table	At green table
Transition to outside	Signal transition/bow bubbles	Clean up breakfast tables	Help children to transition
Outside	At big toy	In the field	Clean and Sanitize tables
Transition to classroom	Help children transition to circle time	Signal transition	Help children wash hands
Circle time	Support children at circle	Lead circle	Break
Centers	Zone 1	Zone 2	Zone 3

## Slide 9: Staff Schedule

- Share the example of an assignment chart or matrix used for zoning in the classroom.
  - Emphasize that charts can be adapted to fit individual classroom needs.
- Describe the chart.
  - The left hand column lists activities and transitions for the day. The top rows list the staff members available for teaching.
  - It is important to be as detailed as possible in listing activities and transitions so that everyone knows exactly what they should be doing during each activity of the day.

## Learning Activity: Zoning Map

Set-up the activity by having the group break into classroom teams or small groups. Pass out one map per classroom team. Each team sketches a map of their classroom environment and breaks it into zones according to how many staff are most often in the classroom. Remind teams to use the back of the sheet to map out the outside play area!

Walk around the room and check in with each team for questions and feedback.

- This is a good time to work with the teams to discuss room arrangement and any challenges they may face. For example, what if one zone has all of the higher supervision needs areas (e.g., blocks, art, and dramatic play)? Work with the classroom teams to problem-solve this. It might lead to discussions about re-arranging furniture/centers to better meet supervision needs.

**HOW TO USE ZONING IN THE CLASSROOM**

- Break down each activity into various duties
- Specify the teacher roles, zones and responsibilities at the beginning of the week
- Make sure everyone understands their roles and zones
- Post a chart in a visible location in the classroom



### Slide 10: How to Use Zoning in the Classroom

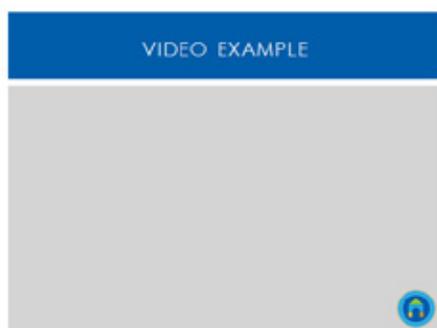
Describe key procedures for using zoning:

- Develop an organizational chart and list each activity and routine that happens throughout the day as well as all classroom team members.
  - Include the transitions between activities and outside play time.
  - Think of the jobs that need to be done at each activity and assign them to different team members.
  - These jobs can be rotated weekly so all team members understand all roles.
- Review the zoning assignments at the start of each week, and make sure that everyone understands their roles and knows their zones.
  - Be sure to check in with new staff members or staff members who have less experience and make sure they feel comfortable with their zones and their responsibilities.
- Methods for posting the staff schedule chart:
  - Post a chart in a visible location for all to see and reference throughout the day.
  - Give each teacher a copy of the zoning chart to keep in their pocket for quick reference.

## Learning Activity: Staff Zoning Chart

Set-up the activity by having the group break into classroom teams or small groups. Pass out one map per classroom team. Each team sketches a map of their classroom environment and breaks it into zones according to how many staff are most often in the classroom. Remind teams to use the back of the sheet to map out the outside play area!

- Walk around the room and check in with each team for questions and feedback.
- The trainer may need to work closely with the groups to help them break the day down into the necessary details in order to ensure that the staff know what they should be doing during every time of the day.
- Remember that the activities go down the left column, the staff members on the top row and the specific tasks are written into the corresponding cells on the chart



### Slide 11: Video of staff planning

#### Introduce the video:

- In this classroom, the teachers spend 15 minutes at the beginning of each day clarifying the roles and expectations for the teachers, volunteers and children.
- As participants watch the video, encourage them to note a few things:

The teacher talks with the assistants about what each person's role, including the parent volunteer, will be during all activities of the day.

- Notice how the materials for the activities are prepared ahead of time.
- The teacher solicits feedback about how activities are working.
- Teachers make plans for changes that may be necessary.
- Additionally, note how this group of teachers has chosen to keep personal zoning charts for reference throughout the day.

#### After the video solicit feedback.

- Was there anything else that the participants noticed happening in the video?
- What did they like, and how will this impact their use of zoning?

**TIPS FOR ZONING**

- **Position** your body so you can see your whole zone
- **Scan** your zone and the classroom or outside area often
- Practice **talking** to the other teacher or teachers in the classroom as children move between areas



## Slide 12: Tips for Zoning

- Think about body positioning.
  - Position your body at child level, but with your back to a wall or the edge of your outside space, if possible.
- While interacting with one group of children, lift your eyes to ensure that the other children in your zone are also engaged in an activity. Scanning allows for monitoring of problem areas and to act quickly and proactively before problems arise.
- Talk with other teachers throughout the day.
  - As a child leaves your zone, communicate with the other staff members to let them know that someone is joining their area.

**VIDEO EXAMPLE**




## Slide 13: Video of “Tips for Zoning”



### Introduce the video:

Inform participants that they will watch a video that provides examples of a teacher using the “Tips for Zoning.”



### Ask participants what key elements they noticed.

- Highlight or add the following points.
  - The teacher's body is positioned with her back to a wall and her eyes toward the rest of the classroom.
  - She looks up to check-in and see what is happening in the classroom.
  - The teacher smiles at another teacher. This is a non-verbal way of communicating with other teachers.

### IMPORTANT NOTE:

- The teacher remains in her zone.
- She is able to spot any potential problems which may need her attention.
- Using these strategies maximizes the teacher’s ability to effectively use teaching time.



**OOPS! CLUMPING**

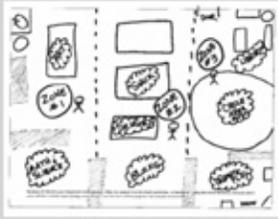



## Slide 14:

### Problem #1: Clumping

- Teachers are in the same area of the classroom rather than spread out amongst the children in the room.
- When “clumping” occurs,
  - Teachers not be able to adequately monitor all of the children and
  - Learning time may not be maximized since both teachers are focusing on just one or two children rather than many children across all areas of the classroom.

## CLASSROOM MAP WITH "ZONING" AREAS



## Slide 15: Solution #1: Zoning Map

- Look again at the classroom zoning map.
  - Teachers have been assigned a specific area or “zone” to monitor.
  - They will each remain in their general area, keep their body positioned so they can see all that is happening in their zone and communicate with other staff members as needed.
- At times a teacher may need to leave a zone in order to handle a specific situation or issue.
  - Communicating between staff ensures that “clumping” doesn’t happen as well as ensures that all children are being watched and attended to at all times.

## STAFF SCHEDULE

Activities/Transitions	Staff Person A	Staff Person B	Staff Person C
Arrival	Greet children and parents	Help children put away backpacks	Get tables ready for breakfast
Breakfast	At red table	At blue table	At green table
Transition to outside	Signal transition/blow bubbles	Clean up breakfast tables	Help children to transition
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Transition to classroom	Help children transition to circle time	Signal transition	Help children wash hands
Circle time	Support children at circle	Lead circle	Break
Centers	Zone 1	Zone 2	Zone 3

## Slide 16: Problem #2: I don't know what to do

- Staff can often be heard saying things such as, “We never know who should be doing what.” “Who should be cleaning up?” “Who should be setting up?” “Who is available to take kids to the bathroom?”
- Consider the staff schedule chart.
  - When teachers take the time to fill out a zoning chart and an assignment matrix everyone has clear expectations about their zones and responsibilities.
- Using zoning can help staff feel calmer, more organized and more efficient.

## REVIEW

- Zoning helps to encourage child engagement and maximize learning time
- Zoning is an easy way to organize and utilize staff members
- Zoning takes the guess work out of classroom duties
- Zoning can build staff confidence and create more of a “we’re all in this together” kind of feel

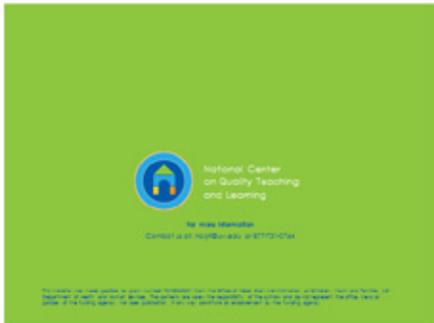
## Slide 17: Review

Review important points

- When teachers know where they should be, they are more prepared to teach children and help them engage in their surroundings, thus eliminating child wait time which can lead to undesirable behaviors.
- Zoning is an easy way to organize and utilize staff members. A classroom chart posted in a visible spot on the wall helps teachers know what their duties are throughout the day.
- Zoning takes the guess work out of classroom responsibilities. The question of “Who is doing what?” doesn’t exist anymore.
- Zoning helps support the lead teacher as well as build confidence in all staff members. When assistant teachers feel that they are in charge of a specific area, and that they are a vital part of helping a classroom run well, they may feel more confident.
- The ongoing communication between adults in the classroom fosters a feeling of collaboration and of “being in this together.”

# Closing Discussion

- Ask participants to share their thoughts on implementing zoning in their classrooms.
- Distribute and review handouts based on participant roles:
  -  Tips for Teachers –a quick handout for classroom staff highlighting key for success in zoning.
  -  Tools for Supervisors – a guided observation tool for zoning.
  -  Helpful Resources - further information about zoning for classroom staff and/or supervisors.
- Thank participants for joining in today's workshop.



## Slide 18:

Provide participants with NCQTL contact information and encourage them to visit our website for additional resources.

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**For more Information**

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