Host: Creating a schedule that gives children planning and reflection time promotes their cognitive development. It also promotes positive behavior.

Host: During planning time, early in the day, children have an opportunity to set goals for themselves and then follow their interests independently. Children may become more focused and self-reliant and need less guidance from the teacher. During review time, at the end of the morning or day, children can share their feelings about what they have accomplished. They might talk about what excited them or what frustrated them.

Host: Planning and reflection time doesn’t have to be long. It just needs to provide children with a chance to think about what they want to do and then share how it went. Let’s take a look at how one teacher includes planning and reflection in her daily routine.

Teacher: Alex what would you like to look at today?
Student: House area.
Teacher: House area? And what will you do in the house area?
Student: I will play with the camera.
Teacher: Natasha, what are you going to do in the house area?
Student: Play with the ice cream.
Teacher: With ice cream? You’re going to make strawberry ice cream or vanilla?
Student: Vanilla. Vanilla.
Teacher: You think you might make a gingerbread cookie today? You think so. Alright, okay. There’s your name. Where would you like to work, Maya?
Student: With Natasha.
Teacher: Oh, everyone is going to the house area? And what are you going to do in the house area?
Student: Make a gingerbread cookie.
Teacher: Okay. What do you think you need to make a gingerbread cookie? Do you think you’ll need flour? And raisins, and peppercorns? Okay.
Teacher: Now Trey, you may stand up and tell where you worked at. And you may use, and Miss Maria made her gingerbread boy and she said you could use that. What can you tell Miss Maria? He can have it? Did you say he could have it? Well wonderful! Where did you work at today, Trey?
Student: I worked at the block area. I worked at the computer area.
Teacher: Now let’s listen to our friend Maya. Where’d you work
Maya?
Student: The house area
Teacher: Tell us what you did in the house area.
Student: I played with the baby dolls, I cooked the cookies.
Teacher: Where’d you work today?
Student: In the block area.
Teacher: And tell the boys and girls what you did in the block area.
Student: I build.
Teacher: What did you build?
Student: I builded a house.
Teacher: Was it a tall house or a short house?

Host: The ideal time to conduct planning and reflection sessions is at group time. You might schedule a
short class meeting at both the beginning and end of the day to do this.

Host: There are other ways to plan and reflect with children. Caregivers might ask children informally at
breakfast or when greeting them on arrival what they plan to do that day. They might ask children in
the morning to place a name card on a board in the center where they plan to start their day.
Caregivers can ask small groups of children at afternoon snack to reflect on their earlier activities. They
might ask individual children just before they go home to talk about what they did that day. A nice time
to do this would be when parents come to pick them up. The important thing is to schedule a time for
children to plan out what they will do each day and reflect back on what they accomplished.

Host: Now we want you to think about your daily schedule. Is there enough free choice and play?
Is there a good balance of teacher-guided activities and active play?