Family-Centered Practices

Initial Practice Based Professional Standards for Early Interventionists/Early Childhood Special Educators (EI/ECSE)

2.3

Standard 2

Candidates use their knowledge of family-centered practices and family systems theory to develop and maintain reciprocal partnerships with families. They apply family capacity-building practices as they support families to make informed decisions and advocate for their young children. They engage families in opportunities that build on their existing strengths, reflect current goals, and foster family competence and confidence to support their children's development and learning.

Component: 2.3

- Candidates engage families in identifying their strengths, priorities, and concerns; support families to achieve the goals they have for their family and their young child's development and learning; and promote families' competence and confidence during assessments, individualized planning, intervention, instruction, and transition processes

Objectives

- Describe strategies to engage families in identifying their strengths, priorities, and concerns

- Describe strategies to support families to achieve the goals they have for their family and their child's development and learning

- Describe strategies to promote family's competence and confidence during assessment, individualized planning, intervention, instruction, and transition processes

Families Are Where Children Learn

- **Children grow and learn in the context of family**

- **School and community** are extended environments in which children continue to practice and expand their emerging knowledge

- **Adult experiences in larger systems impact child learning** and development in an ongoing cycle (e.g., adult well-being, employment, health, education)

Engaging Families in EI/ECSE

- Family engagement is mandated through IDEA

- Effective family engagement is central to the effectiveness of early childhood special education programming

Discussion: Barriers to Family Engagement

- When families feel disconnected from systems of service provision, they are less likely to participate, and child outcomes are negatively impacted

- What might make families feel alienated or disconnected from EI/ECSE services, based on your experiences?

Families as Partners

(Turnbull, Turnbull et al., 2015 pp. 161)

Family-Professional Partnership:

- A relationship in which families and professionals agree to build on each other's expertise and resources for the purpose of making and implementing decisions that directly benefit children and their families

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Partnering with Families: IDEA

- Parent participation is required to complete nondiscriminatory assessment, create an IFSP or IEP plan and transition plan

- Parents have the right to access educational records

- Hold the right to serve on state and local special education advisory committees

Creating Partnerships with Families

- **Trust**: families have the information they need, ensure confidentiality, and ensure permission to disagree with providers

- **Communication:** Families share their stories, dreams, priorities; information is shared without jargon at every step

- **Respect**: meetings scheduled when convenient to families, family perspective is invited and honored at every step

Creating Partnerships with Families

(adapted from Turnbull, Turnbull et al., 2015)

- **Commitment**: Noticing and responding to how families feel about information, creating a predictable supportive presence

- **Advocacy**: Making sure families have the choice of who can attend evaluation and planning meetings. Practitioners act as an advocate for families and scaffold their advocacy for their children

Partnering with Families: Assessment

- Families share their stories

- Express preferences, priorities, expectations for their child, and describe their child's strengths and needs

- Collaborate with professionals to contribute to or administer assessment procedures within authentic contexts and interactions

- Hold role of the decision-maker at all points along the continuum of services

Partnering with Families: Assessment

- Service providers equal partners, families' experts on their child(ren) and family

- Recommendations align with family concerns and priorities

- Maintain confidentiality and educate parents on their rights within the system

  - [Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA)](#)

- Use jargon-free and effective communication

Strengths-Based and Family-Centered Evaluation Summaries

- Presents the child as competent

- Delays described from a standpoint of ability

- Intervention presented as a means to promote optimal functioning and inclusion

- Adapted for primary language and culture of family

Partnering With Families:
IFSP and IEP Planning

- Making sense of multiple sources of assessment and recommendations from a range of service providers can be overwhelming to families and challenging for professionals

- During the assessment and planning period, service providers can engage in effective communication to create a unified plan about sharing results with families

Partnering With Families:
IFSP and IEP Planning

- With families, deciding on which practitioner will take the lead role for interacting & communicating with families and supporting intervention strategies

- Obtain consents from family to communicate across professions, keeping families in the center of all communications
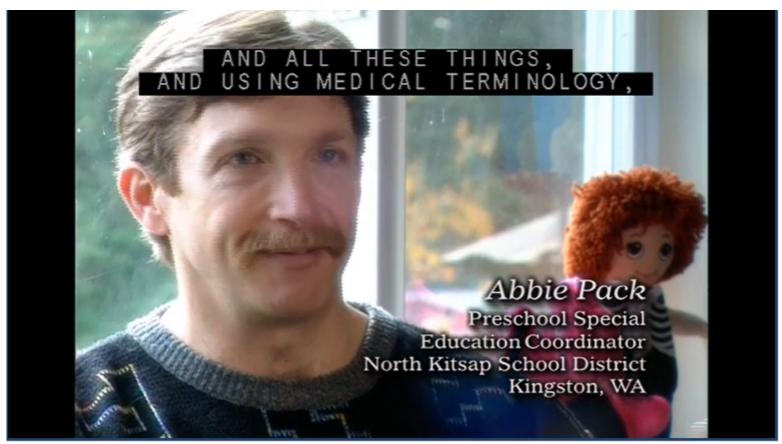
Video: When Concerns Arise

- [Session 3: When Concerns Arise: Learning from Families' Experiences | ECLKC (hhs.gov)](#)

- What kind of support may be needed for families right away, sometimes even before they learn about instructional strategies? What supports did families gain access to support in this video?

- How will clear information, access to support, and other resources positively impact family well-being and positive changes in child development?

Video: When Concerns Arise: Learning from Families' Experiences

https://view.vzaar.com/5598910/player?apiOn=true&GAOn=true

Partnering With Families: Intervention

- When practitioners support relationships within family routines, practitioners build family capacity to engage in positive reciprocal interactions and individualized intervention strategies

- Effective EI/ECSE practice is **triadic** – sharing information with families using a capacity-building approach so that they, in turn, can effectively use strategies with their child and understand how to support the use of those strategies by teachers in early care environments

- Do not often work with a child in the absence of caregiving adults

Capacity-Building Coaching Strategies

(Lorio, Romano et al., 2020)

- Joint planning

- Information sharing

- Observation

- Direct teaching

- Demonstration and modeling

- Caregiver practice with feedback

- Problem solving

- Reflection

Family-Centered Transition Practices

- Family-centered approach/involvement in planning that promotes continuity of experiences

- Providing clear, understandable, and accurate information

- Foster relationships

- Ongoing family support over time

Family-Centered Transition Practices

- Relationship-building: connection of families with new systems

- Provide families with information about rights and responsibilities to make informed choices

- Families choose who they want to invite to IEP

- Include explicit steps for family members as they exit programs and prepare for the next steps

Activity

Video 2.2: The family's viewpoint - Connect Modules (dec-sped.org)

- Watch this video and take note of the things this mother brings forward as she considers the transition of her daughter from Part C home-based services to Part B preschool services

- What are their hopes for their child's transition?

- What are the things she is hoping the preschool staff will understand?

- How would you use a capacity-building approach to making sure this transition goes smoothly?

Video: The Family's Viewpoint

References and Resources

- Bronfenbrenner, U. (1961). Toward a theoretical model for the analysis of parent-child relationships in a social context. *Parental attitudes and child behavior*, 90-108.

- Turnbull, A., Turnbull, R., Erwin, E.J., Soodak, L.C., Shogren, K.A. (2015) *Families, Professionals and Exceptionality: Positive Outcomes Through Partnerships and Trust*; Pearson

- Rosenberg, S. A., & Smith, E. G. (2008). Rates of Part C eligibility for young children investigated by child welfare. *Topics in Early Childhood Special Education*, *28*(2), 68-74.

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References and Resources

- Lorio, C. M., Romano, M., Woods, J.J., & Brown, J. A. (2020). Review of Problem Solving and Reflection as Caregiver Coaching Strategies in Early Intervention, *Infants & Young Children*: Vol. 33 (1); pp. 35-70.

- The Center to Mobilize Early Childhood Knowledge (CONNECT) and the Division for Early Childhood (DEC) Modules: Module 4 – Family-Professional Partnerships

- Video 2.2: Transition: The family's viewpoint | Connect Modules (dec-sped.org)

Disclaimer

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