Engaging Families of Infants and Toddlers with Disabilities
Strategies to Enhance Your Practice

Agenda

You will learn more about:

- The everyday context of families with young children with disabilities
- Strategies for enhancing program systems that support families of young children with disabilities
- Professional development strategies for staff

POLL

The Everyday Experiences of Families of Young Children with Disabilities

What is it like to have a young child with a disability?

Welcome to Holland
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Stage</th>
<th>Description</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Denial</td>
<td>&quot;This can’t be happening to me!&quot;</td>
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<tr>
<td>Anger</td>
<td>&quot;Life isn’t fair. Why is this happening to me?&quot;</td>
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<tr>
<td>Bargaining</td>
<td>&quot;If I do this, it won’t happen and everything will be fine.&quot;</td>
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<tr>
<td>Depression</td>
<td>&quot;Who cares anymore? I give up.&quot;</td>
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<tr>
<td>Acceptance</td>
<td>&quot;It’s happening and I can handle it.&quot;</td>
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The Role of Routines

What are Routines?
- Predictable
- Functional
- Happen many times across the day
  (Woods, Kashinath, & Goldstein, 2004)

The Role of Routines

Types of Routines?
- Play
- Caretaking
- Social
- Learning Activities
- Community and Family
  (Jennings, Hanline, & Woods, 2012)

From Results Matter: Colorado Department of Education
https://www.cde.state.co.us/resultsmatter/blakesstory
Consider:

1. How do the details of a family’s daily life help you understand their experience?

2. How does your interaction with families:
   • Build on their strengths?
   • Help them deal with their challenges?
   • Support them in their daily lives?
   • Drive their vision for their child’s future?

Strategies for Enhancing Systems of Support for Families of Young Children with Disabilities

Strategies for Engaging Families of Young Children with Disabilities

Supportive Transitions at Program Entrance

Two-Way Communication Systems

Collaboration with Families and Specialists
Supportive Transitions at Program Entrance

- Welcoming strategies
  - Presenting an inclusive physical environment
  - Gathering relevant information
  - Connecting with mentor family

Supportive Transitions at Program Entrance

- Partnering with early intervention providers
- Summarizing specialized services with an IFSP-At-A-Glance form
- Contact Information
- Service Providers
- Schedule
- Outcomes
Two-Way Communication Systems

- Provide multiple ways to communicate
- Are efficient & effective
- Promote strong relationships

Tools that Promote Two-Way Communication

#1 Communication Notebook

Tools that Promote Two-Way Communication

#2 Daily Note
Tools that Promote Two-Way Communication

#3 LISTSERV

Tools that Promote Two-Way Communication

#4 Social Media

Collaboration with Families and Specialists
- Team Collaboration
- Home-School Partnerships
- Community Partnerships
Collaboration with Families & Specialists

- Teaming Strategies
  - Routine Matrix for Infants
  - Teaming on the fly
  - Team meetings

Home-School Partnerships

Positive Parenting

Home Learning Strategies
Home-School Partnerships

- Emphasize child’s physical health
- Physical activity play
- Nutrition
- Handwashing
- Toothbrushing

Community Partnerships

Professional Development Strategies for Staff
Some Strategies

• Specialized Training for Teaching Staff
• Coaching on Partnering with Families
• Resources to Support Conversations with Family Members

SpecialQuest


Recorded Webinars from PACER

http://www.pacer.org/live-stream/archive.as
Being an Effective Mentor Coach

“A Mentor-Coach is a journey guide—someone who walks beside another on her journey. Mentor-Coaches support professional development and work to build excellence in the daily practice of teaching staff. Teachers benefit from the support they receive from a more experienced professional who helps them reach their goals and share their challenges.”

-JoAn Knight Herron

Conversation Tips

- Inform: talk about development regularly
- Share: share resources
- Listen: use active listening
- Highlight: highlight the child's strengths
- Prepare: be prepared
- Prioritize: start by asking families to start the conversation
- Follow up: follow up promptly

Follow up promptly

We'd love to hear from you!

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