Collaborating with Families: Supporting and Including Caregivers in Early Intervention

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Collaborating with Families: Supporting and Including Caregivers in Early Intervention

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Objectives

• Participants will understand the importance of including caregivers in early intervention practices, with an emphasis on the core components of caregiver-mediated interventions.

• Participants will identify strategies for gaining and sharing information with families in the initial stages of intervention.

• Participants will identify coaching strategies designed to support caregivers throughout the EI process.
Early Intervention: A Background

• 1973:
  – American Disabilities Act
• 1975:
  – Education for All Handicapped Children Act
• 1986:
  – IDEA was passed
  – **Part C: Statewide, Comprehensive, & Multidisciplinary Service**
• 2011:
  – 300,000 plus children nationwide qualify for early intervention
• 2012:
  – 6,640 children receive services from Babies Can’t Wait in the state of Georgia

(Oser & Coen, 2003; The National Early Childhood Technical Center, 2011; Department of Public Health, 2012)
Why Early Intervention?

• To enhance the child's development
• To provide support and assistance to the family
• To maximize the child's and family's benefit to society
• To promote brain development in the first three years of life
• To develop strong, every day living skills for later in life

(The National Early Childhood Technical Center, 2011)
Broadening our Perspective

• Historically: Early Intervention system advocated family-centered practices to include caregivers in decision making and establishing goals.

• Recently: Early Intervention system advocates a broadened perspective of family-centered practices with an emphasis on caregiver-mediated intervention.

(Friedman, Woods, & Salisbury, 2012)
Let’s Compare!

Clinician-Implemented Intervention  Caregiver-Implemented Intervention
Clinician-Mediated Intervention

- Clinician educates/informs caregivers
- Clinician gathers information on caregivers’ priorities and concerns
- Clinician infuses caregivers’ priorities and goals into treatment as applicable
- Clinician implements treatment plan
- Clinician tracks progress
- Caregivers observe and take turns
- Caregivers implement home program
Caregiver-Mediated Intervention

- Partnership between caregivers & clinician
- Family-centered collaborative planning
- Clinician gathers information from caregivers
- Clinician observes natural activities of the day
- Caregivers & clinician engage in ongoing consensus building conversations
- Caregivers directly use intervention practices to increase positive learning opportunities & acquisition of skills
- Clinician guides & educates caregivers’ implementation via collaborative coaching
Let’s Start at the Very Beginning...

Initial Conversations with Families

Where Do We Begin?
Video: Initial Conversation
Gaining and Gathering Information

• Core components of initial conversations with families:
  – Details of the early intervention program
  – Parent participation
  – Less early intervention jargon and more every day language
  – Timing is everything

(Woods & Lindeman, 2008)
Gaining and Gathering Information

• Tools for gathering information from families:
  – Conversations
  – Questionnaires
  – Mapping
  – Problem solving
  – Environmental scan

(Woods & Lindeman, 2008)
Video: Gaining and Gathering Information
Continuing to Gather Information

• Sharing while gathering information
  – Make the most of teachable moments

• Every child is different
  – Find out what activities are really preferred by the family

• Develop a plan to understand their values, concerns and outcomes

(Woods & Lindeman, 2008)
How Do We Build Caregiver Capacity?
How Do We Build Caregiver Capacity?

• Early intervention providers can build caregiver capacity by:
  – Strengthening the caregiver-child relationship
  – Building the caregiver’s confidence and competence to enhance the child’s learning
  – Accomplishing family-identified outcomes

(Friedman, Woods, & Salisbury, 2012)
Adult Learning Principles

• Research has shown that adult-learning strategies that incorporate active-learner participation have a greater effect than those that do not.

• Adults need opportunities to practice new skills, as well as opportunities to evaluate and reflect on their practice.

(Dunst & Trivette, 2009; Friedman, Woods, & Salisbury, 2012)
Stages of Caregiver Coaching

- Coaching strategies are organized within a **flexible framework** based on *adult learning principles* and *family-centered practice*.

1. Setting the Stage
2. Application Opportunities & Feedback
3. Mastery

(Friedman, Woods, & Salisbury, 2012)
Setting the Stage

• **Setting the Stage:** Caregiver and provider build rapport, share updates and information, and create a plan for the session.

• Caregiver coaching strategies:
  – Conversation and Information Sharing
  – Observation
  – Direct Teaching
  – Demonstrating

(Friedman, Woods, & Salisbury, 2012)
Video: Setting the Stage
Application Opportunities and Feedback

• **Application Opportunities and Feedback:** Caregiver practices strategies with child with support from provider.

• **Caregiver coaching strategies:**
  – Guided Practice with Feedback
  – Caregiver Practice with Feedback
  – Joint Interaction

(Friedman, Woods, & Salisbury, 2012)
Video: Application Opportunities and Feedback
Video: Application Opportunities and Feedback
Mastery

• **Mastery**: Caregiver reflects, problem solves, and generalizes strategies to support child across natural activities and settings.

• **Caregiver coaching strategies**:  
  – Problem Solving/Reflection

(Friedman, Woods, & Salisbury, 2012)
Video: Mastery
Bringing It All Together

• Coaching strategies are organized within a **flexible framework** based on *adult learning principles* and *family-centered practice*.

• Caregiver coaching is a **dynamic process**.

(Friedman, Woods, & Salisbury, 2012)
Video: Mastery
Brainstorm: Putting it Into Practice

• How do you think these coaching strategies could fit into your practice?
  – Gathering and gaining information
  – Building caregiver capacity
  – Utilizing adult learning strategies
  – Flexible caregiver coaching
    • Setting the stage
    • Application opportunities and feedback
    • Mastery
Overview

• Gathering information from families is an on-going process throughout their Early Intervention experience.

• Coaching a caregiver is a flexible process, so be prepared to adjust your supports as needed.
Thank You

• Thank you to the families who have participated in our program and shared their videos for us to use today.

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• Questions?