



LEARNINGbyte

Assessment

Supporting Families in Making Informed Decisions



PURPOSE OF ACTIVITY

This activity is designed to consider the role practitioners play in sharing information with caregivers to support them in making informed decisions for their child.



RESOURCES NEEDED

- Handout – [Informed Family Decision-Making Practices Checklist](#)



SPECIFIC STEPS

1. Open discussion by asking participants to identify specific times a caregiver may need to make an informed decision throughout the early intervention process (i.e. referral, intake, eligibility determination, assessment for eligibility, assessment for service planning, IFSP development, transition, referral to outside agency, IFSP review, etc.).
2. Explore what types of decisions caregivers make during these times. Reflect on why it may be difficult to share information with families (awkward, don't want to upset them, do not think they are ready to hear the information, etc.).
3. Inform participants you will be exploring some help-giving practices used to engage families in making informed decisions. Facilitator can view characteristics of help-giving practices on the Informed Decision-Making Practices Checklist for more details.
4. Pass out the *Informed Decision-Making Practices Checklist*.
5. Instruct participants to complete the checklist based on a recent experience during which the participant supported a caregiver who needed to make an informed decision.
6. Once they have completed the checklist, ask participants:
 - a. **What are some things you are doing well?**
Ask participant to describe specific ways he/she is practicing a certain characteristic. For example, ask participant to describe how he/she is being sensitive and responsive to the family's unique situation by listening to their concerns, aware of own biases, reading nonverbal cues, etc.
 - b. **Which practices are challenging and why?**
Participants will have the opportunity to discuss challenges implementing practices. Ask peers to address challenges and provide feedback to support each participant's answer.
 - c. **How could you improve?**
Continue discussion by asking participants to reflect and share ways to improve (re-visiting families concerns and priorities, ensure a clear understanding of the caregivers goals and desired outcomes, etc.).
7. Summarize thoughts and themes reflected in the discussion. Ask participants to develop a plan of action to ensure caregivers are informed during the decision making process. Reflect on the progress in your next meeting.



ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

El Strategies for Success blog posts:

- [DEC Recommended Practices: Family \(Part 1\)](#)
- [DEC Recommended Practices: Family \(Part 2\)](#)
- [Extra! Extra! Read All About....Integrating the Decision Tree](#)

Webinar:

- [Talks on Tuesday, April 2019: We Are All In This Together: Sharing Difficult Information with Families in Early Intervention](#)

Documents:

- [Supporting Family Member Informed Decision Making](#)
- [DEC Recommended Practices: Family 1, 2, 3, 4, 7](#)