



LEARNINGbyte

Service Coordination

Real Scenarios for Real Service Coordinators



PURPOSE OF ACTIVITY

This activity illustrates how the five coaching characteristics (joint planning, observation, action/practice, reflection, feedback) can be used by service coordinators to gather information and support families.



RESOURCES NEEDED

- Handout – *Service Coordination Scenarios*
- Flip chart/whiteboard and markers (optional)



SPECIFIC STEPS

1. To open the activity, ask SCs to describe the goal(s) of service coordination (e.g., empower families, link them to needed resources, help them get their needs met, coordinate EI and other services). Tell them that you are going to work together on some scenarios to think about they could use coaching to meet these goals.
2. Read scenario #1 to the group (do not pass out the handout yet). Invite the SCs to talk about whether or not they have experienced a similar situation and how they supported the family. Then, ask them to identify which coaching characteristic(s) could be used to address the situation. As a characteristic is identified, ask the group to describe specifically how it could be used and how this could benefit the SC and the family.
3. Repeat with other scenario. If you have time, you could invite participants to share a situation they are experiencing now and work together as a group to brainstorm how the SC could use the coaching characteristics to help the family.
4. Pass out copies of the handout. Instruct participants to read both charts below each scenario and reflect on which chart represents how they are most likely to support families. They do not have to share this reflection with the group if they would rather not.
5. Discuss the pros and cons listed for each scenario. Compare and contrast them and discuss which approach (traditional SC or resource-based coaching) is more aligned with the goals of service coordination that they initially shared.
6. Once the scenarios have been discussed in depth, use the following discussion questions for reflection:
 - How did using coaching compare to just solving the family's problem for them (i.e., giving them a list of phone numbers, telling them who to call, making an appointment for them)?
 - How did using coaching help the SC achieve the goals of service coordination?
 - How did using coaching help the parent be a more active participant in the problem-solving?
 - How did coaching help build the parent's capacity to know what to do without your help in the future, should a similar issue arise?
 - What will you do differently the next time a parent requests your assistance?



ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

VEIPD Topic Pages – [Coaching in Early Intervention Service Coordination](#)

Articles – [Operationalizing Resource-Based Intervention Practices](#) (Mott, 2006)

[Influences of Resource-Based Intervention Practices on Parent and Child Outcome](#)
(Mott & Dunst, 2006)

Service Coordination Scenarios

Scenario #1

Felicia receives a call from Isaiah’s mother, asking for help finding a child care provider. She says she has found a job and starts in two weeks.

Traditional SC	SC Provides Resource Information
Provides information	Felicia offers to mail the family with a list of child care providers in the local area.
Follows-up	On her next contact, Felicia asks Isaiah’s mother if she found a child care provider.
CONSIDER	
<p>PROS: Less work for Felicia. Family has information they can use to contact child care providers.</p> <p>CONS: Felicia does not know anything specific about the family’s needs so may provide contacts that the mother has already tried or that do not meet her needs. Therefore, providing a generic list may not be very helpful. Isaiah’s mother also learns that she can call Felicia with problems and Felicia will help...but what will she do when Isaiah is discharged and she doesn’t have access to Felicia anymore? How does this empower her to meet her own needs in the future?</p>	

Resource-based Coaching	How the Service Coordinator Can Coach the Family to Develop the Solution to the Problem
Observation	<p>If Felicia visits the family soon, she could sit with Isaiah’s mother as she calls several child care providers to be a support. This would give Felicia the opportunity to learn how Isaiah’s mother approaches the task and what she asks (which would tell Felicia what is important to her).</p> <p>Or, if Isaiah’s mother would like, Felicia could accompany her on visits to child care settings. She could observe the visit, then reflect and share feedback with the mother following the visit to help her process her decision.</p>
Action/ Practice	Felicia could suggest that they make a list of what is important to Isaiah’s family in terms of child care before his mother begins making her calls and visits.
Feedback	Felicia could provide feedback about the list of priorities. If she is present when Isaiah’s mother calls, she could reflect with her about how the calls went and share feedback.
Reflection	<p>Initially, Felicia asks the following open-ended questions to gather information:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “What have you already tried/who have you already contacted?” • “What are you looking for in terms of child care?” (part-time/full-time, home or center, location, cost) • “How can I help you?”

Resource-based Coaching	How the Service Coordinator Can Coach the Family to Develop the Solution to the Problem
Reflection (cont.)	<p>Following the mother’s calls to potential child care providers, Felicia could facilitate reflection by asking:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “What were your impressions from that phone call?” • “How would you feel about that provider caring for Isaiah?” • “What else do you need to do or find out to help you make your decision?” <p>Felicia could ask similar questions following a visit to a child care setting.</p>
Joint Planning	<p>Felicia and Isaiah’s mother could come up with a plan for what the mother will do before their next contact, such as make the list of priorities, call 2-3 child care centers, schedule a visit with a particular provider, etc. Then, Felicia could follow-up after an agreed upon amount of time (“How about I give you a call at the end of the week to see how your search is going?”)</p>
<p>CONSIDER</p> <p>PROS: Felicia has more specific information so can provide more individualized assistance. Isaiah’s mother learns how to think through the problem and practices solving it herself. She bears the responsibility of solving the problem, rather than depending on Felicia. This way, she is better prepared for the next time a similar issue arises.</p> <p>CONS: Conversation takes a little longer, takes more of Felicia’s time.</p>	

Scenario #2

John, a service coordinator, is visiting with Sophia's family during a physical therapy visit. Before the visit, Renata, the physical therapist (PT), called John and expressed concerns about the insect problem in the home. John decides to stay for a few minutes after Renata leaves to discuss this concern with Sophia's grandmother.

Traditional SC	SC Provides Resource Information
Provides information	John offers to link the grandmother to local pest control services. He also says that his program has funds to help families with emergency needs like this and he will try to access them to cover the cost of pest control.
Arranges Service	John obtains emergency funds and schedules the pest control visit. The home is completely sprayed for cockroaches.
Follows-up	John contacts Sophia's grandmother after the treatment to see how it went. Everything goes well until about a month later, when the bugs return.

CONSIDER

PROS: The family received assistance and the home was treated by pest control.

CONS: The fix was temporary and the problem persists. There may be another underlying problem contributing to the pest problem that needs to be resolved but John has not gathered information to find this out. Additional information is needed to determine why the problem persists and brainstorm how to fix it. The grandmother needs to be a more active participant in finding a long-term solution so that she has the knowledge, skills, and resources to address and prevent this issue in the future. Finding assistance to pay for pest control may still be needed, but John should explore the family's informal resources (e.g., church, family members, friends) for assistance first because these are the resources the grandmother can tap into when the family is no longer involved in early intervention.

Resource-based Coaching	How the Service Coordinator Can Coach the Family to Develop the Solution to the Problem
Reflection	<p>John shares Renata's concern with Sophia's grandmother: "Renata has mentioned to me that she is concerned about the cockroaches she's seen crawling near Sophia's feeding tubes. I wanted to touch base with you about this to see if there is anything I can do to help?"</p> <p>John uses reflective questions to gather information and find out more about the family's perspective:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What are your thoughts about this? • What have you already tried to do to deal with the insect problem? • What do you think needs to happen? • How can I help you? <p>Sophia's grandmother says that she has tried bug traps and spraying but they don't work for long. She's worried too but can't afford to have her home professionally treated. She asks if John knows of any resources to help pay for a pest control treatment.</p>

Resource-based Coaching	How the Service Coordinator Can Coach the Family to Develop the Solution to the Problem
Reflection (cont.)	John asks if she has any ideas about how the cockroaches are getting in or why the problem persists. This discussion leads to the revelation that there is a hole under the sink that has not been repaired and that may be where the cockroaches are coming from.
Action/Practice	They discuss options for repairing the hole, and the grandmother says that she can ask her neighbor if he can fix it for her. They also brainstorm strategies and resources for getting the home treated for cockroaches. Sophia's grandmother says that she could pay \$50 towards the treatment once she gets paid.
Joint Planning	John and Sophia's grandmother agree on a plan that includes the grandmother calling her neighbor to ask for help. John will check with his agency to see if funds are available to help with the cost of pest control treatment after the hole is repaired. He will call the grandmother in two days to follow-up.
Feedback	On his follow-up call, John finds out that the neighbor is going to seal the hole this weekend. He provides specific feedback by telling the grandmother that he is so glad that she was able to reach out to a neighbor and find help. John offers his agency's assistance to cover the rest of the cost of the treatment (whatever is left after she pays the first \$50). He provides the grandmother with the contact information for the company that his agency has authorized so she can get it scheduled.
Joint Planning	They agree that the grandmother will call John when she has scheduled the treatment. He will then follow-up with the company to arrange partial payment.
CONSIDER	
<p>PROS: John has the information he needs to provide individualized, meaningful assistance to the help the family find long-term solutions to their problems. Sophia's grandmother is an active participant in solving both problems – the problems are not solved for her. She accessed her informal resources (neighbor) and made arrangements to fix the problems. She now (hopefully) has knowledge and skills to prevent the problem in the future.</p> <p>CONS: John expended more time and effort to support the grandmother and help her manage the problems.</p>	