

# Tips for Coaching in Child Care Settings

*Establishing respectful, collaborative relationships when caregivers request early intervention services in child care settings.*

## **Preparing for first child care visit**

- Invite child care staff to IFSP meeting.
- Obtain signed consent from caregiver to exchange information with child care staff, including child's IFSP outcomes.
- If the caregivers' schedule allows, invite them to first & subsequent visits at child care.
- Obtain from caregiver, child care director's name & number, teacher's name and times caregiver may be available for first visit.
- Establish communication system with caregiver for visits at child care center.
- Contact director to discuss the visitor policies of the program and schedule the first visit.
- Discuss coaching model and what it looks like in child care centers with caregivers, directors and child care staff.
- Confirm time of initial visit with caregiver.

## **Ongoing visits at child care centers**

- Engage in joint planning with child care provider at the onset of visit.
- Facilitate plan which may include observing child activities, child care provider-child interactions, modeling/prompting, offering feedback, and using reflective questions to stimulate thinking/elicite insight.
- Develop joint plan with child care provider for between visits and for the next visit.
- If caregiver did not attend, follow up with them after visit to child care.

## **The first visit at a child care center**

- ⇒ The first visit to the center is an information gathering session to orient the child care providers. *Using a coaching style of interaction, the provider will collaborate with child care staff to ensure that they are supported and successful. Ongoing communication is very important.*
  - Ask child care providers about their experience working with EI providers. If yes, ask "What did that experience look like?" If not (or if different), describe what it will look like while you are there.
  - Ask "Do you know what I'll be focusing on during the visit?"
    - Discuss the focus will be on *working within the classroom's normal routines, and acting as an additional resource to the child care provider to problem solve and to support the child's participation, development and learning (IFSP outcomes).*
  - Ask "What goes well or what makes this child special?"
  - Ask "What is the easiest part of your day with child?"
  - Ask "What is the most difficult part of your day with child?"
  - Discuss child's IFSP outcomes
- ⇒ Based on input and questions, develop a joint plan for the remainder of the visit centered around the child care provider's challenges, priorities or concerns/IFSP outcomes.
- ⇒ At the end of the visit, with the child care provider develop a joint plan for between visits and for the next visit that will occur at child care, including the date and time of the visit.
- ⇒ Establish communication system with child care provider (to confirm visits).
- ⇒ If caregiver did not attend, follow up after visit to child care.

## **Tips for EI providers supporting child care providers**

- Respect and value child care providers as team members and as the authority in the classroom.
- Recognize the magnitude of responsibilities that the child care provider has within the classroom, the limited amount of time they have to engage with providers, and be flexible in teaming.
- Ensure opportunities to observe and reflect on the program so that the feedback provided is individualized and meaningful.

## References

DEC Recommended Practices A2,4,6,7; E1, 3, 4; INS4, 13; TC1, 3

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