



Cross Disciplinary Competency Area Case Studies

Case Study: Coordination and Collaboration

Key Indicators

The story of Aiden, his family, and the professional team who served him illustrates key indicators of the cross-disciplinary competency area of Coordination and Collaboration:

- Uses effective communication skills (listening, speaking, writing) with others;
- Shares information and resources with others from different disciplines and agencies;
- Coordinates the delivery of early intervention services, resources and interventions with practitioners from other disciplines and agencies;
- Demonstrates leadership at meetings with others from different disciplines and agencies to implement a team approach to service delivery;
- Collaborates with others to assess the child and family, design intervention objectives and learning plans, assign responsibilities for the implementation of the plan and collect progress monitoring data on a child and family learning;
- Negotiates with others from different disciplines and agencies who have different viewpoints and opinions to problem solve and take actions to benefit the child and family; and
- Facilitates transitions from the Part C or 619 programs to another program with others and the family.

Aiden's Early Intervention Team

Aiden began receiving early intervention (EI) services at 15 months of age. At that time, his mother, Gwen; her mother and Aiden's grandmother, Ms. Beery; and childcare teacher, Miss Sara, were concerned that Aiden was showing some cognitive and communication delays. At the time of his referral for Part C services and while he received EI services, Aiden attended the child care program at the high school that his mother, Gwen, attended. Gwen lived with her

mother, Ms. Beery, in a single family home. Ms. Beery was also available to help with childcare when necessary.

In addition to his family, the early intervention team consisted of an early childhood special educator (ECSE), occupational therapist (OT), speech-language pathologist (SLP), and physical therapist (PT). The primary service provider (PSP) was the early childhood special educator, Marina. The team met on a weekly basis and discussed each child and family receiving Part C services frequently through the intake, evaluation, assessment, and IFSP process. Each child's progress was reviewed at least quarterly, but more often if his/her PSP needed support from other team members or upon the request of the parent. Although the providers were employed by different agencies, interagency agreements ensured the participation of the EI providers in team meetings and the ongoing sharing of information.

Routines Based Interview and Initial IFSP Meeting

After Aiden was determined eligible for EI services based on cognitive and communication delays, Marina (ECSE) conducted a functional assessment at the childcare program during center time, because both Gwen and Miss Sara shared that this was a particularly challenging time for Aiden. Tanisha, the EI service coordinator, conducted a Routines Based Interview (RBI) with Gwen to gain information about services and supports that she used to help her maintain a routine, keep up with her school work, and support the health and development of Aiden. Gwen explained that Aiden was recently evaluated by a developmental pediatrician who is a partner in the pediatric practice where Aiden receives medical services. Gwen also shared that the family receives SNAP benefits, and that she receives weekly "mentoring from her church group, to help her organize her home and school related tasks". Gwen said that she was grateful for this support, as she wanted to be as independent as possible and not overly rely on her mother. Gwen gave Tanisha permission to contact the developmental pediatrician to invite her to the initial IFSP meeting and/or share the written report from her developmental evaluation.

The above information was discussed in the Initial IFSP meeting to assist in the development of the IFSP outcomes. Tanisha facilitated that meeting which included Gwen, Ms. Beery, Miss Sara, Marina (ECSE), Jasmyn (SLP), and Elizabeth (OT). Once the IFSP outcomes were developed, the IFSP team agreed that Marina would be the best long-term PSP based on the outcomes identified and Marina's knowledge and experience. Marina said that she would initially need the support of Jasmyn within the next 30 days to assist her in determining strategies

for facilitating Aiden's communication especially during circle time at childcare. Marina also asked Elizabeth to share strategies for engagement during morning and evening routines and suggestions for Aiden to stay calm during busy or messy times at home or at school. Gwen gave Marina permission to share the IFSP with Aiden's developmental pediatrician and her mentor from the church group.

Ongoing Team Meetings and Transition

During the next team meeting, Aiden's team members clarified their roles. The team used Interprofessional Education Collaborative (IPEC) Expert Panel Recommendations (IPEC, Expert Panel, 2011) to maintain team cohesion and productive problem-solving. To ensure that Gwen and Miss Sara were equal members of the team, the team received permission from the high school principal to hold team meetings at the high school. Marina, the PSP, facilitated the team meetings.

Aiden and Gwen received services from the team for another year at the childcare program. The team began the transition process prior to Aiden's third birthday. During the initial transition meeting, the team learned that Aiden's family wanted him to participate in the preschool classroom at their neighborhood school. Therefore, the transition outcomes included observation of the preschool classroom; a discussion with the preschool teacher; and review of the curriculum, behavioral expectations, and physical layout of the room. The information obtained from this visit was shared by Marina and Gwen with other team members and used to recommend accommodations and modifications to the preschool teacher to increase the likelihood that Aiden successfully participate in classroom activities. An ongoing schedule of observation, collaboration, and team- "teaching" was established to insure that he continues to be successful. As necessary team members will set up meetings to consult with the classroom teacher on how to use assistive technology with Aiden (e.g., the low-tech communication picture board, an adaptive chair, and pencil grips and extensions for engaging in art and messy play.

Discussion Questions

1. Identify two activities that the team did that you would consider positive and helpful?
2. What other activities or behaviors could be used to improve the process?
3. Identify barriers to implementing a team process as described in this story? What would need to be arranged to overcome or bypass these barriers?