EI/ECSE Standard 2  
Component 2.2  
Overview & Speaker Notes

Intended Audience:

Overview for Facilitators:
ECPC has developed an anchor presentation for each of the Initial Practice-Based Professional Preparation Standards for Early Interventionists/Early Childhood Special Educators (EI/ECSE). The components under each standard are presented separately. The materials are designed for an in-service professional development (PD) program but can be used in a pre-service teacher preparation course. This resource will increase professionals’ ability to address each of the EI/ECSE standard and components. Additional materials for each standard can be found on the ECPC Website: Curriculum Module | The Early Childhood Personnel Center (ecpcta.org)

Speaker Notes
The speaker notes provide a narrative and activities for each slide. You will see speaker notes for most of the slides within the slide deck. The notes provide additional details about the information on a particular slide, including the context for the information and key points. The notes are a guide, and speakers should feel free to modify these as needed. Please note the following:

- The narrative is a sample script for the presenter. Although you may read it verbatim, speaker notes are intended as a guide for the presenter, and you may modify them as needed.

Materials Required for face to face
1. Share the outline with timelines for the training (build in breaks)
2. Conduct an opening activity (introductions/ice breaker)
3. Computers or tablets with internet access for participants (if possible)
4. Handouts
5. Projector with audio capable for playing video with speakers
6. Presentation slides with speaker notes
7. Develop an evaluation tool for all attendees (e.g., continuous improvement activity)

Materials Required for virtual
1. Distribute the link to the online platform in advance
2. Share the outline with timelines for the training (build in breaks)
3. Conduct an opening activity (introductions/ice breaker)
4. Determine how participants will receive handouts and materials, on the cloud, using a storage platform (e.g., dropbox, google, etc.)
5. Platform to share presentation (e.g., zoom, teams, etc.) with polling questions prepared in advance and breakout room capability
6. Upload or send handouts in advance or through platform (insert through chat)
7. Download videos ahead of time to prepare for low bandwidth from slide deck
8. Share screen capability (be sure to enable sound for videos)
9. Develop an evaluation tool for all attendees (e.g., continuous improvement activity)

**Objectives for Standard 2, Component 2.2:**
After participating in this professional learning opportunity, participants will be able to:
- Describe effective communication strategies to use with families, including those from different cultural and linguistic backgrounds
- Describe strategies to inform families about resources and supports available to them
- Develop strategies to help families make informed decisions and advocate for access, participation, and equity in natural and inclusive environments for their child
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Slide 1

Family-Centered Practices
Initial Practice Based Professional Standards for Early Interventionists/Early Childhood Special Educators (EI/ECSE)
2.2

Slide 2

Standard 2
Candidates use their knowledge of family-centered practices and family systems theory to develop and maintain reciprocal partnerships with families. They apply family capacity-building practices to support families in making informed decisions and advocating for their young children. They engage families in opportunities that build on their existing strengths, reflect current goals, and foster family competence and confidence to support their children’s development and learning.

Slide 3

Component: 2.2
- Candidates communicate clear, comprehensive, and objective information about resources and supports that help families to make informed decisions and advocate for access, participation, and equity in natural and inclusive environments.

Slide 4

Objectives
- Describe effective communication strategies to use with families, including those from different cultural and linguistic backgrounds
- Describe strategies to inform families about resources and supports available to them
- Develop strategies to help families make informed decisions and advocate for access, participation, and equity in natural and inclusive environments for their child
**Communication and Collaboration**

- **Communication:** any means by which an individual relates or exchanges experiences, ideas, preferences, knowledge, and feelings
- **Collaboration:** interactive relationships between adults such as family members and professionals to work together to achieve mutually agreed-upon goals

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**Elements of Effective Communication**

- Linguistically accessible
- Culturally normative
- Jargon-free and strength-based language
- Respectful
- Confidential
- Presumes competence of both parties
- Fully reciprocal

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These are some of the most foundational elements of effective communication. (read through the list)

We aim to meet families where they are using words and practices that make sense to them. We use their primary language, we talk about abilities that they feel relate to their own child in the world they live in, including home, school, community.

We refrain from the use of jargon, acronyms, deficit based language.

We treat every family member and child with respect, and we ensure that the information they share with us is confidential.

We always accept the reality that family members are competent in their own unique context, even if we don’t understand their values from our own perspective.
We make sure that interactions go both ways – always – and are horizontal vs. vertical in nature.

Let’s talk a little bit about what we mean when we talk about making early intervention services “linguistically accessible” (read slide)

Families from diverse linguistic and cultural backgrounds may not have access to clear information about services
May hesitate to request clarification
Poor communication due to language barriers compromises engagement and quality of services


[Facilitator can encourage discussion about availability of qualified interpreters in their communities – and brainstorm ways to increase capacity of this resource locally]

[Facilitator may choose to create breakout groups for participants to explore their state and local resources for translated form and assessments, and/or resources for interpreters]

https://www.birth23.org/providers/provider-resources/translated/
https://found-in-translation.org/
Slide 11

**Strategies to Locate Translation and Interpreter Resources, cont.**

- Collaborate with local universities to identify students in language programs who may need practicum hours
- Collaborate with other non-profit or other community agencies that have bilingual staff to help with translations or to identify community members who may want to be trained as an interpreter

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Slide 12

**Strategies for Service Providers Working With Interpreters** (Acar & Blasco, 2016)

- Introduce all parties and explain roles
- Always look at and talk directly to family members rather than to the interpreter – avoid side comments
- Clarify the need for precise translations at all times
- Never enlist children to interpret
- Avoid asking “do you understand?” and instead ask which details could be better explained – focus on specifics
- Speak in a measured pace – and pause often

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Slide 13

**Implementing Culturally Normative Practices**

- Everyone carries culture with them
- Systems of education and care most often based on tenets of the dominant culture
- Children and families learn and use communication, behavior, and prioritize goals in the context of their own culture
- ECSE providers acknowledge and normalize the unique culture of families and create bridges into early care and education environments

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Slide 14

**Building Trust Through Respectful Interactions**

- Being predictable – doing what you say you will do, being on time
- Providing clear information about assessments and programming - creating space for questions
- Making sure that families are the decision-makers
- Frequent communication – check-ins, texts, pictures
- Responding to family needs rather than jumping in – so, what did you try? How did that work?
- Celebrating small steps forward when families are overwhelmed/struggling

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Note, service provider and interpreter should touch base PRIOR to meeting with the family, to discuss key points of the meeting and for the service provider to answer any of the interpreter’s questions regarding information that is going to be presented.

Support discussion around the reality that typical child behaviors in preschool – that often involve testing boundaries and boisterous behaviors – are more quickly labeled as problematic when children are black or brown, especially boys. How can we examine our own definitions of “challenging behavior” in ways that keeps the child safe from broader judgements about who s/he is and about the community s/he is from?

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RgHZq-qJHeY

Effective Communication

- Effective communication is the cornerstone of family-centered practice
- Currently, there are too many families of children who are eligible for EI services (in Part C or Part B) who do not engage with early intervention services (ITCA, 2020)
- Families of color less likely to engage with and remain in EI services
- EI/ECSE practitioners can use effective communication to increase the likelihood of family engagement
Facilitator can invite discussion of the many ways communication can break down, especially in first meetings when a trust relationship has not been identified.

What can EI/ECSE staff do when they notice that family members are sending these kinds of signals that communication is not open and reciprocal? Ask participants to share their experiences.

Discuss with the group how we can set the stage with families as equal partners in the interaction – which may mean noticing aloud that the family member may not be sure about this process – taking a step back to allow opportunity for expression of doubts or concerns.

Support discussion about how previous experiences with formal systems, and ongoing experiences of racial inequity and associated intergenerational trauma may create barriers to establishing a trust relationship for some family members.

Discuss the reality that in some cultural groups, families want and expect us to present as the experts – how do we do this while keeping relationships respectful and reciprocal?

**Positive Communication Skills**

- Nonverbal communication
  - Physical proximity – face to face, on the same level
  - Appropriate use of eye contact, making sure to notice how family member uses sustained eye contact
  - Attending to the speaker rather than to paperwork
  - Noticing how your body expresses your interest in listening to the speaker

**Identify and Address Communication Breakdowns**

- Family member may be relatively silent (nod, “uh-huh”) or appear distracted (e.g., looks down at phone)
- May be confused, overwhelmed, or may feel alienated from the process
- May feel they must “comply”
- Professionals may unintentionally dominate the interaction taking the position of “expert”
Slide 20

Positive Communication Skills: Listening

- Respect: Honors behavior as valid and authentic – represents that person alone at the moment in time
- Reciprocity: Value the power of the family member’s voice as a resource that brings as much to the interaction as your own
- Responsiveness: Each individual has something to contribute – connection is always the focus

Slide 21

Effective Listening

- Create space for the family member to speak – we often rush to fill moments of silence
- Ask open-ended questions that are relevant to what the family member is communicating about
- Paraphrase what the family member said to clarify your understanding
- Respond to affect – acknowledge emotions when you hear them expressed

Slide 22

Establishing Partnerships with a Diverse Array of Families

Enhancing shared power and connection:
- Respect: Honors all communication as valid and authentic
- Reciprocity: Values the power of the family member’s voice, brings as much to the interaction as your own
- Responsiveness: Each individual has something to contribute – connection is always the focus

Slide 23

Activity: A Tale of 2 conversations

- Watch the first of the "Tale of Two Conversations" videos on the next slide, and identify aspects of the interaction that contributed to a lack of connection
- Watch the second video and identify some of the positive communication strategies we reviewed

Facilitator: Each video is around 7 minutes long – if you are time-limited you may want to move on and simply bring these points into the activity at the end of this presentation

Support discussion that family members may not be able to fully attend to or engage in early intervention services until their basic needs are met – they need to establish predictability and safety in their daily lives first.

There may be barriers that you can’t see around why family members do not act on referrals to, for instance, housing or child care. We want to remain curious and open to factors that may lead family members to avoid interacting with formal systems, including fear that their child may be taken away, fear of change when they are already
overwhelmed, influences from other important relationships.

Can help to offer to make contact with agencies together when a trust relationship has been forged


https://www.parentcenterhub.org/find-your-center/


https://www.autismspeaks.org/autism-support-family-help

https://thearc.org/our-initiatives/


Facilitator may choose to have groups identify resources to connect families they know to parent support

https://www.cde.state.co.us/resultsmatter/RMVideoSeries_EarlyIntervention
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Video:
Reflections During the Final Home Visit

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RqR5OfR Wvgw

Slide 31

References and Resources


https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/full/10.1177/1096250616674516


https://doi.org/10.1177%2F0040059918758163

Slide 32

References and Resources


Slide 33

References and Resources

- Connecticut’s Birth to Three
- CCCE Early Childhood Videos at Eastern CT State U; Learning about a Child’s Family Culture
- Head Start|ECLKC website: Children with Disabilities

https://www.birth23.org/providers/provider-resources/translated/

https://www.youtube.com/watch?app=desktop&v=RgHZq-qJHeY

https://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/children-disabilities/specialquest-multimedia-training-library/session-6-inclusion-story