Hello, my name is James and this is my story...
OVERVIEW
FOR
FACILITATORS

PURPOSE
ECPC has developed two presentations to be used in conjunction with the Using Your Story to Teach Toolkit. These trainings will guide family members to tell their story in a way that will teach pre-service and in-service personnel in early childhood intervention what family-centered practices should, or should not, look like. The materials are designed to prepare family leaders to partner as trainers at institute of higher education (IHE) preparation programs or state professional development (PD) courses.

INTENDED AUDIENCE
Family members of children with disabilities who have received services through early childhood intervention (ages 0-8 years) and are familiar with the EI/ECSE Standards.

OBJECTIVE
After participating in this training opportunity, family members will be able to:
• Develop a story that illustrates a skill, strategy, or guiding principle from the EI/ECSE Standards.
• Present the story in an IHE or PD course as family faculty.

SPEAKER NOTES
The speaker notes provide a narrative or facilitation directions for each slide. The narrative is intended to provide additional details about the information on a particular slide. Facilitator directions are shown in italics. You should always read aloud what is presented on each slide and use the speaker notes to highlight and reinforce key points. The notes are a guide, and speakers may add their own insight as needed.
MATERIALS REQUIRED FOR FACE TO FACE
1. Share an agenda for the training.
2. Conduct an opening activity (introductions/icebreaker).
3. Handouts or computers/tablets with internet access.
4. Projector with audio capability for playing video with speakers.
5. Presentation slides with speaker notes.
6. Develop an evaluation tool for all attendees (e.g. consumer satisfaction survey).

MATERIALS REQUIRED FOR VIRTUAL
1. Distribute the link to the online platform in advance (e.g. Zoom, Teams, etc.). Prepare polling questions, breakout rooms, etc.
2. Determine how participants will receive handouts/materials – via email, on the cloud, using a storage platform (e.g. Dropbox, Google docs, etc.).
3. Upload or send handouts in advance or through online platform (link in chat).
4. Download videos ahead of time in case of trouble with link in slides.
5. Share an agenda for the training.
7. Presentation slides with speaker notes. Make sure you have capability to share screen (enable audio for sound).
8. Develop an evaluation tool for all attendees (e.g. consumer satisfaction survey).
**Slide 1**

You can illustrate best practices in early intervention and early childhood special education through sharing your own experiences. This presentation will help you learn why we use our stories to teach and where to find those stories that will demonstrate best practices to pre-service or in-service personnel working with infants or toddlers with disabilities.

**Slide 2**

**Objectives for Part I**

- Understand why we use family stories to teach pre-service and in-service personnel in early childhood intervention what professional standards look like in the field.
- Find stories within your experiences that best illustrate family-centered, culturally responsive practices related to the EI/ECSE Standards.

Read the slide aloud to the audience.

**Slide 3**

**Telling Stories is Powerful!**

- We appreciate fact, logic, wit—but we FEEL stories
- Stories help us connect through shared experiences, beliefs and purpose

As the family of a child who has received early intervention or early childhood special education, you have unique and valuable insight into the best ways to deliver services in the field. Your story can be a gift to another person.

**Slide 4**

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vt24Kj2MK_k

*The video is 11 minutes long (You must be connected to the internet for the video to work)*

Hand out the Viewing Guide for participants to complete while watching.

As you watch this story, use the Viewing Guide to jot down some reflections. You want to think about - What imagery makes this a great story? What did you see in your mind’s eye as she tells her story? How is humor a part of this story? What emotions do you feel? What did you learn?
### Slide 5

- **Reflection**
  - What imagery made this a great story?
  - What did you see as she told her story?
  - How was humor part of this story?
  - What emotions did you feel?
  - What did you learn?

*Facilitate a discussion after the video using the questions on the Viewing Guide.*

Think about all of the different things we have taken away from her story. If she had crafted her story with the intention to teach, how might she have made her story different in order to convey a specific message?

### Slide 6

- **Tell a Meaningful Story**
  - Tell a story and telling a compelling, authentic story are two different things. Know the difference.
  - Telling your story involves time, energy and attention, but making your story meaningful requires effort and practice.
  - You want your audience to feel what you felt during the experience.

*You must take to draw listeners into your story and make it meaningful to them.*

### Slide 7

- **Empathy vs. Sympathy**
  - Empathy is better than sympathy.
  - When you have sympathy for someone, you pity the concerned person.
  - But when you have empathy, you literally feel the agony or any other emotions that person is experiencing.
  - When you sympathize you show pity, whereas when you empathize you show sharing of feeling.

*Families do not want pity. They want providers to understand how it feels to be in their shoes and consider their perspective when providing early childhood intervention services.*

### Slide 8

- **Tell a Difficult Story**
  - Difficult conversations are not necessarily enjoyable, but sometimes they are necessary.
  - Words and actions of providers can have a life-long impact on families.

*Not all family stories are positive, but all family stories can be delivered in a positive framework. If the experience was not positive, communicate lessons learned and share strategies to be done differently in the future. Do not shy away from conveying the impact of a provider’s words on your family. Share an example of what was said and how it could have been shared differently. Help practitioners understand the importance of empathetic communication.*

### Slide 9

- **Communicating With and About People with Disabilities**
  - Language reflects what we think about people.
  - As leaders, how we talk about people influences attitudes towards them.
  - People-first language emphasizes the person first, not the disability.
  - It is used to communicate respectfully about individuals with disabilities.
  - Some individuals prefer identity first language.

*We also need to be aware of our own words when communicating with and about people with disabilities.*

*Read the first two bullets.*

Historically, people with disabilities have been described negatively, leading to negative attitudes towards them.

*Read the last three bullets.*

As leaders, people-first language is the best place to start when talking about others and models respectful communication for providers. However, when speaking directly with individuals with disabilities, individual preference should be respected and honored.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Slide 10</th>
<th>Why do we use our stories to teach? Telling your story can have a powerful influence on students coming into the field and on professionals who want to develop and expand their skills. They may benefit from your perspective, learn from your mistakes, or be inspired and empowered by your tenacity.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Slide 11</td>
<td>Telling your story to teach is different from telling your story for advocacy.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Slide 12</td>
<td>Stories that teach students and providers what it is like to experience services from the family’s perspective can have significant influence on the way they deliver services throughout their careers.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Slide 13</td>
<td>We will go into greater detail about how to develop your story in Part II of this presentation. Sharing your experiences through storytelling can highlight what professional standards and practices should look like in the field. So, where can you find professional standards and practices?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Slide 14</td>
<td>The Initial Practice-Based Professional Standards for Early Intervention and Early Childhood Special Education rather known as the EI/ECSE Standards are the first set of standards specific to Birth through age 8. They address the knowledge and skills needed to prepare a highly qualified EI/ECSE workforce. They also promote collaborative partnerships across disciplines, for example with physical therapists, occupational therapists, and speech and language pathologists, and all others on the team.</td>
</tr>
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</table>
Slide 15

ECI/ECSE Standards
- Six themes within the standards:
  - Families as partners in decision making
  - Respect for diversity
  - Equity for all children and families
  - Individually, developmentally, age, and functionally appropriate intervention and instruction
  - Partnerships, collaboration, and team interaction
  - Multi-faceted use of technology and interactive media

There are 6 themes within the standards that are assumed and should be applied across all standards.

Slide 16

ECI/ECSE Standards
- SEVEN STANDARDS with components to describe each:
  - Child development and early learning
  - Families and partners
  - Legislation and standards
  - Collaboration and teaming
  - Assessment processes
  - Application of current research in the planning and facilitation of intervention
  - Using NAEYC and NCTE standards, interventions, and instruction
  - Reflection and clinical practice
- Description of necessary field and clinical experiences

Components describe what candidates for degrees, licenses, and/or certifications should know and be able to do before practicing in the field.

Slide 17

Example
- ECI/ECSE Standard 3: Collaboration and teaming
  - Candidates partner with families and other professionals to develop individualized plans and support the various transitions that occur for the young child and their family throughout the birth through 8 age span.

Look for your stories in the turning points or big, life changing moments.

Close your eyes (if you are comfortable with that). Think about your experiences in early childhood intervention. Is there one that stands out to you? Maybe when things were going well? When things were going wrong? Pull out one of those experiences and focus on one moment in time along your journey. Picture in your mind what was happening. What do you see? What were you feeling? Who was there with you? What was going well? What could have been done differently? What did you learn from this experience?

Open your eyes and jot down all of the things you just thought about.

Slide 18

Find Your Story
- Professional standards are already embedded in your stories – which ones you pull out depends upon your audience and purpose.

When you find your story, you’ll know it because you will feel it.

Guide participants through the following activity. Use the Visualize Your Story worksheet to help them record their visualization and find their story within the DEC RP’s and ECSE Standards.

Activity 1: Find Your Story

Close your eyes (if you are comfortable with that). Think about your experiences in early childhood intervention. Is there one that stands out to you? Maybe when things were going well? When things were going wrong? Pull out one of those experiences and focus on one moment in time along your journey. Picture in your mind what was happening. What do you see? What did you hear? What were you feeling? Who was there with you? What was going well? What could have been done differently? What did you learn from this experience?

Open your eyes and jot down all of the things you just thought about.
Remember that the professional standards are already embedded in your stories. Check off one or more of the standards on the worksheet that relate back to your story. Which one will you focus on when you tell your story? Which recommended practice or standard best conveys the skills, strategies, or guiding principles that are illustrated in your story?

Your story should touch on a personal experience with early intervention or early childhood special education services. Relate that experience to something that was done well, or something that could have been done better. If it was negative, be sure to tell how the experience could have been better. What do you want them to do differently?

What have we learned?

Read slide.

You can practice the visualization activity any time to help you brainstorm more stories. Look for visuals that would help illustrate your story and elicit emotion from your audience.

Part II will dive deeper into the elements of a good story, and how to develop your story so that it conveys the right message and has the greatest impact on your audience.

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Disclaimer slide.
### Speaker Notes with Slides

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Slide 1</th>
<th>In Part I, we learned why we use stories to teach pre-service and in-service practitioners in early intervention and early childhood special education. This session will prepare you to present as a panel member, co-teacher or family faculty at an Institute of Higher Education or in state professional development courses.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Slide 2 | **Objectives for Part II**  
- Learn how to craft a meaningful story that will convey a clear message to pre-service or in-service personnel in early childhood intervention.  
- Develop a story that will illustrate a particular skill, strategy or guiding principle related to the EI/ECSE Standards.  
**Read the slide aloud to the audience.** |
| Slide 3 | **Recap: Using Your Story to Teach Part I**  
**Activity: Find Your Story**  
- What experiences did you identify?  
- Which EI/ECSE Standards do your experiences illustrate?  
- How will your experiences teach practitioners how to demonstrate one of the standards in the field?  
**Facilitate discussion about experiences participants found that relate back to the EI/ECSE Standards.**  
**Recap: What topic are you planning to address? Did you find any specific teachable moments?** |
| Slide 4 | **Using Your Story to Teach**  
- Choose stories that illustrate an intentional and deliberate point.  
- The story will illustrate your point and bring it to life.  
**As you write your story, there are some things to keep in mind to help your story stick with the audience.** |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Slide 5</th>
<th>Building Skills as Storytellers</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Know your &quot;Why&quot;.</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Know your audience.</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Learn to organize your information.</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Use visual aids or imagery.</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Focus on the turning point.</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Highlight the solution.</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Know your why – What are you trying to teach? Is there a specific outcome you would like from your audience?</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Know your audience - Who is your story directed to? Make sure your story is relevant to your audience.</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Learn to organize your information- How will you present your points?</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Use visual aides or imagery - Are there pictures or videos that will help you elicit emotion from your audience?</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Focus on the turning point – where does your story change? Was there a success or a challenge that you faced? Was there something that could have been done better?</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Highlight the solution – What suggestions will you give your audience? What message do you want them to take away?</td>
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<tr>
<th>Slide 6</th>
<th>Understand What a Personal Story Is and Is Not</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• The story has to be yours.</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Be authentic.</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>• This is not a hypothetical.</td>
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<tr>
<td>You must be authentic, otherwise you risk losing your credibility with your audience. You can illustrate a point with a hypothetical, but if you are doing your job as a storyteller, you won’t have to create a hypothetical.</td>
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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Slide 7</th>
<th>Build Your Own Narrative</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Decide on a purpose or goal for your story.</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Give an adequate description to set the foundation of your story, but do not overwhelm with details.</td>
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<tr>
<td>The audience needs intentional, relevant and specific detail. You cannot sum up an effective personal story in six words. You need adequate time and space to build your narrative, and your audience needs to invest time in your story.</td>
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<tr>
<th>Slide 8</th>
<th>Build Your Own Narrative</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• You must lead your audience along the path you want them to take and this takes time.</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Families engage in cycles that do not always come with a beginning, middle and end because families are complex.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Just because you lived it chronologically, you don’t have to tell it that way. Organize your story so it makes the most sense to your audience.</td>
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</table>
Make sure your audience has the information they need to understand your message.

Read the text message exchange aloud to the audience.

Read the text message exchange aloud to the audience.

Make your message matter. Choose carefully which information you feel comfortable sharing. This is very important. Do not leave room for misinterpretation or assumptions. Make sure your story conveys the right message.

What do you want them to know? What do you want your audience to understand by telling this story? There might be things that don’t fit inside the frame.

You don’t need to include every detail. You will need to take some of the good stuff out. A story that “tells it all” is likely to be ineffective. Focus on the details that enhance the purpose of the story and illuminate your message.

Be sure to describe the important people in your story in a way that allows the audience to know and care about them. Help the listeners create images in their minds. Be sure to pull out visuals - the small things that make your experience come alive. Choose experiences that elicit feelings.
| Slide 14 | The journey your audience takes should be different from your experience. It should be uplifting and a teachable moment for them. What powerful examples are you willing to share? A challenge or setback? A moment of personal growth or triumph?  
*Pause to let participants know that they only have to share what they choose to. They do not have to share a personal experience unless they are comfortable with it. There will be some things about our stories that are off limits to other people, and that’s okay.* |
<table>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Focus on the Turning Point</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• The moment things changed. It can be big, small, positive or negative. But something happened and reality changed.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Slide 15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Include the New Reality</strong></td>
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</tbody>
</table>
| • What did you learn?  
• This is the part of your story that makes or breaks your authenticity.  
• Who did you become?  
• Are you wiser, stronger?  
• How could this situation have been improved? |
| Slide 16 | Have you met your goal of telling this story? What message do you want the audience to take away? Where do they go from here? How will they change their practices in the future? |
| **Emphasize Your Purpose** |
| • What should the audience learn from your story?  
• What solutions and suggestions will you give your audience? |
| Slide 17 | End strong. Your audience should know you have reached the end of your story. They should have a concrete takeaway. If they don’t, your story is little more than a missed opportunity. |
| **Emphasize Your Purpose** |
| • Make sure the story’s conclusion makes sense.  
– Does it fully convey the main teaching point?  
– Does it relate well to the rest of the story?  
– Is it too abrupt?  
– Is it easy to understand?  
– Does it touch the heart? |
| Slide 18 | Practice telling your story out loud, in the mirror, record yourself, etc. Then ask a friend or someone else to listen and provide feedback. Your story is a process. It should never be finished. Change it for your outcome or your teaching objective. Continuously enhance and adjust your story over time. |
| **Practice, Revise, Practice Again** |
| • Practice, practice, practice—this is critical for families who are new trainers and even for those who are more seasoned.  
• Solicit honest feedback on whether the story will teach the topic you are focused on. |
### Slide 19

**Be Prepared**
- Make sure your presentation is related to the topic of the training.
- Keep the presentation short, focused, and teachable.
- Make sure you ask questions about what is expected.
- Be ready to facilitate a follow-up discussion.

How much time do you have to present? Will the presentation be face to face or virtual? Live or pre-recorded? How will you facilitate follow-up questions or a discussion?

### Slide 20

**Be Prepared**
- Think about:
  - What to do if you become emotional: some of our stories are hard to talk about.
  - How to deal with problem participants: defer questions, "parking lot", time constraints.
  - It's okay to say "I don't know" or "I had not considered that". It's okay to ask the audience for their own ideas on how to resolve an issue.

What will you do if you become emotional? Remember to breathe – take a drink of water, take a break, ask for a moment to collect yourself.

Our stories can be messy and difficult to tell. Stay positive and solutions focused even if it's a story about overcoming obstacles.

### Slide 21

**Storyboard Template**
- Your story should demonstrate success or challenge highlighting one of the [VCE Standards](#).
- Use the template to guide you in crafting your story.

Choose one of the experiences you brainstormed to turn into a teachable story.

### Slide 22

**Storyboard Template**
- Your story should demonstrate success or challenge highlighting one of the [VCE Standards](#).
- Use the template to guide you in crafting your story.

If this training is happening in-person, participants may want to put this format on a large piece of paper and use sticky notes so that they can organize and revise their ideas.

### Slide 23

**Story Rubric**
- Practice telling your story – out loud, in a mirror, on a recording.
- Use the rubric to make sure you have all the elements.
- Share the story to be sure that your message is clear and accurate. Ask the listener to fill out the rubric and provide feedback.

If time allows, have participants pair up to share the outline of their stories and get feedback.
**Slide 24**

**ACTIVITY: CRAFTING YOUR STORY**
- Use the Story Board to guide you in telling your story.
- Read it over silently, or out loud if you can find a private place to practice.
- Find a partner and ask them to complete the Story Rubric while you tell them your story.

Allow participants about 45 minutes to craft their story. For this activity, their story does not need to be more than 10 minutes long.

**Slide 25**

**Reflection**
- Decide on a purpose or goal for your story.
- Make your message matter. Do not leave room for misinterpretation or assumptions.
- Choose intentional, relevant, and specific details.
- Bring the story to life with imagery or visuals.
- Highlight solutions or suggestions for the audience to take away.
- Be prepared. Know what the expectations are, and be ready to facilitate a follow-up discussion.

*Read the slide aloud.*

**Slide 26**

**End of presentation.**

**Slide 27**

**Disclaimer slide.**