

Using Your Story to Teach *Toolkit*



Stories help us connect through shared experiences, beliefs, and purpose.

Families can play a critical role in the training of highly qualified personnel who serve infants and young children with disabilities, and provide valuable insight towards creating trusting, culturally responsive family partnerships.

In addition to having a seat at the table in every component of their state's Comprehensive System of Personnel Development (CSPD), families should be represented in preparation programs for early childhood intervention providers at institutes of higher education (IHE's) as presenters, panel members, and co-teachers. Families should also be an integral part of state professional development (PD) for in-service providers.

The purpose of this guide is to provide a roadmap for crafting a family story that will teach pre-service and in-service personnel in early childhood intervention what family centered, culturally responsive practices should look like. This guide can be used by family leaders to prepare families as trainers in state personnel development efforts.

Using family stories to teach can be a powerful tool to prepare pre-service and in-service providers for successful partnerships with families that will improve child outcomes. Family stories can help providers understand how to partner with families in building capacity that will support child development and lifelong learning.



This toolkit will highlight strategies to develop a family story for trainings, step by step.

Determining Readiness
and Understanding



Finding *the Story*



Developing *the Story*



Revising *the Story*



Sharing *the Story*



Reflecting on *the Story*

Table of Contents

Using Your Story to Teach	5
Step 1 - Determining Family Readiness and Understanding	5
Step 2 - Finding the Story	6
Step 3 - Developing the Story	7
Step 4 - Revising the Story	8
Step 5 - Sharing the Story	9
Step 6 - Reflecting on the Story	10
Appendix.....	11
A - Training Basics	11
B - Resources for Background Knowledge	12
C - Presentations.....	13
D - Resources Used Throughout the Toolkit	14

Determining Family Readiness and Understanding

STEP 1

In order to make an informed decision about involvement in personnel development, families need to consider their role, level of commitment, and resources available to assist in evaluating whether or not this is the right opportunity for them at this time. They need a basic understanding of personnel development in their state. Family leaders will come from diverse cultures with different experiences and background information. In order to provide the necessary foundational knowledge, it is important to know where to direct families to find additional resources.



Families will:

- Complete the **Family Involvement Self-Assessment** to determine their own personal readiness to become involved in personnel development.
- Complete the **Who's Who in Your State** worksheet to identify key players in their state system of early childhood intervention.
- Review the **Commonly Used Acronyms** as a resource for families to know what is being discussed and terms being used. Be sure families define acronyms for the audience, but avoid using them whenever possible.

TIP

To use this toolkit effectively, families should read and be familiar with the [*EI/ECSE Standards*](#).

Finding the Story

STEP 2

Learning to use stories to teach is different than using stories for advocacy. **Using Your Story to Teach – Part I** will support families’ understanding why we use stories to teach and what EI/ECSE standards look like in their lives.

Families will:

- Reflect on elements that make a story meaningful to listeners with the **Viewing Guide**.
- Find experiences that help illustrate a point using the **Visualize Your Story** activities.
 - A story can be about one experience or moment in time along their journey. Families do not have to tell their entire story from beginning to end.
- Learn how to align their stories to professional standards depending on their audience and purpose. The [EI/ECSE Standards](#) are already embedded in family stories.



“Parents are professionals also. Lived experience can assist in understanding gaps that can be present in the development process.”

TIP

Know your “Why”

Developing the Story

STEP 3

Family stories can illustrate the skills, strategies, or guiding principles that lead to improved outcomes for infants, toddlers, and young children with disabilities and their families. **Using Your Story to Teach – Part II** will help families develop meaningful stories that have a clear message for providers.

Families will:

- Decide on the purpose or goal of the story.
- Need to know the intended audience.
- Learn to organize the story so the message is clear and accurate.
- Bring the story to life with imagery or visual aides.
- Focus on the success or challenge that illustrates the message.
- Highlight solutions or suggestions for the audience to take away.
- Develop a story that illustrates one or more of the [EI/ECSE Standards](#) using the **Storyboard Template**.



TIP

Make the message matter.

We appreciate fact, logic and wit - but we FEEL stories.

Revising the Story

STEP 4

Families should make certain that the story reflects on lessons learned. Going back to the **Storyboard Template** will ensure that everything is included in the story. Is the takeaway message clear and concise?

Families will:

- Edit and revise the story, making sure all the elements in the **Story Rubric** are included.
- Practice telling the story - out loud, in the mirror, on a recording, etc.
- Share the story with a friend or mentor to be sure that the message is clear and accurate. Ask the listener to use the rubric and provide feedback.



“What may be important to the early childhood professional may not be important from the family’s perspective. Understanding from both sides is key.”

TIP

Be prepared. Family stories can be emotional and difficult to tell. Stay positive and focus on solutions even if it’s a story about overcoming obstacles.

Sharing the Story

STEP 5

Families may need assistance finding a place to share the story. Some examples may include a pre-service preparation course at an IHE as a panel member, individual presenter, co-teacher or as part of an in-service professional development training/course.

Families can:

- Refer back to the **Who's Who in Your State** worksheet completed in step 1 to connect with IHE's and PD providers in the state.
- Locate IHE personnel preparation programs in their state by exploring the [*Institute of Higher Education Program Map*](#).



Make sure the presentation is related to the topic of the course or training. Be sure families ask very specific questions about what is expected.

Families should ask:

- How much time do they have to present?
- Will the presentation be face to face or virtual?
- How will they facilitate follow-up questions?
 - Refer to **Facilitating the Discussion after a Presentation** for tips.
- Will the presentation be live or recorded? If pre-recorded, when and how will they be able to facilitate follow-up questions?

TIP

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.

Assessing the Story

STEP 6

After the presentation, families should reflect on the story. Consider any formal or informal feedback by the audience. Families should ask themselves if there were any elements of the presentation that could have been better. Learning how to use your story to teach is a process. Families will continuously adjust and enhance the story over time. The focus of the story may change depending on the desired outcome.

Families should ask:

- Will there be an evaluation of the presentation?
 - If so, request the results to prepare for ongoing presentations.
- Was the story effective in demonstrating the standard?
- Did the story elicit emotion from the audience?
- Did the audience demonstrate an understanding of the purpose of the story?
- Was the audience engaged in the follow-up discussion?
- Do they need to refine any elements of the story?



“Early Childhood professionals will be more effective, more empathetic practitioners when they have an understanding and respect of the parent perspective and family journey.”

TIP

Follow-Up. Refine the story based on feedback from the audience.

Appendix

A - Training Basics

- **Conflict:** How to handle conflict with a participant at a training. – be prepared
 - What to do if you disagree with a participant’s comment or statement?
 - ~ Tip Sheet: [Top 10 De-Escalation Tips: \(crisisprevention.com\)](https://www.crisisprevention.com/top-10-de-escalation-tips/)
- **Critical Thinking** –awareness of personal attitudes/biases, and philosophical, emotional, or ethical beliefs that can impact a relationship. [Critical Thinking | SkillsYouNeed](#)
- **Family Centered Practice in ECI** – Delivery of culturally competent and family responsive early childhood intervention that respects and facilitates a family’s active partnership and participation in the assessment, planning, implementation, and monitoring of the interventions delivered to their child and themselves. [Family-Centered Practice | The Early Childhood Personnel Center \(ecpcta.org\)](#)
- **Effective Communication Skills**
 - Taylor, J. (2015). 9 Effective Communication Skills. [\[WWW\] Available from: https://www.habitsforwellbeing.com/9-effective-communication-skills/](https://www.habitsforwellbeing.com/9-effective-communication-skills/)
 - **Facilitating the discussion after the presentation:** Develop a list of questions to ask (or question prompts). It is not enough to ask the question; you have to know **why** you are asking it and how you hope the question will enhance the participants’ learning experience.
 - ~ **Fact Finding Questions** “Who, What, When, Where, Why, and How questions” At the end of a training, facilitators often ask these kinds of questions to get a sense for what the participants took away.
 - ~ **Illuminative Questions** help participants connect their own relationship to what is being shared. These are often the questions that expose a participant’s emotion regarding the story. An illuminative question will often have the word “**feel**” in it as in “How does this make you feel?” or “What do you find most challenging about the...?”
 - ~ **Introspective Questions** help participants examine their own beliefs, values, and assumptions: They are the **so what** questions that help people make sense of situations. They are the questions that require personal reflection. “How does this change how you want to show up as a practitioner?”
 - ~ **Decision-Making Questions** When you need a group to take action, using decision-making questions can help move the process along. Decision-making questions are like: “What do we need to start, stop and continue to make this a success?” or “What are the next steps?”

The key to being good at asking questions is being **skilled at listening**- at having a natural curiosity about what others think. Strong question-askers have a desire to dig deeper into others’ perceptions and beliefs. When participants know that you are not just asking questions for the sake of asking questions but because you actually want to hear the answers – you will create a learning environment that is engaged and energized.

Appendix

B - Resources for Background Knowledge

- **What is a Comprehensive System of Personnel Development?**
 - CSPD in IDEA [Sec. 303.118 Comprehensive system of personnel development \(CSPD\) - Individuals with Disabilities Education Act \(https://sites.ed.gov\)](https://sites.ed.gov).
 - Comprehensive System of Personnel Development (CSPD): Overview [Develop a State CSPD | The Early Childhood Personnel Center \(ecpcta.org\)](http://ecpcta.org).
- **The Division for Early Childhood (DEC) of the Council for Exceptional Children (CEC) resources:**
 - [RPs - DEC Recommended Practices Home | DEC \(dec-sped.org\)](http://dec-sped.org) DEC 2014. Recommended Practices in Early Intervention/Early Childhood Special Education.
 - [EI/ECSE Standards | DEC \(dec-sped.org\)](http://dec-sped.org) (2020). Initial Practice-Based Professional Preparation Standards for Early Interventionists/Early Childhood Special Educators (EI/ECSE) (Initial birth through age 8).
- **Communicating With and About People with Disabilities:**
 - **Person First Language:** Terminology is not one size fits all. How we talk about people influences attitudes towards them. People-first language emphasizes the person first, not the disability. Some people prefer identity first language. Individual preference should be respected and honored. If you don't know what an individual with a disability prefers, then ask. <https://www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/disabilityandhealth/pdf/communicating-with-people.pdf>
- **Diversity, Equity and Inclusion**
 - **Culture:** from Merriam Webster: the customary beliefs, social forms, and material traits of a racial, religious, or social group.
 - ~ **Cultural awareness:** The National Center for Cultural Competence defines “cultural awareness” as being cognizant, observant, and conscious of similarities and differences among and between cultural groups (Goode, 2001, revised 2006). According to Winkelman (2005), awareness of cultural differences and their impact on behavior is the beginning of intercultural effectiveness. He states that “cultural self-awareness includes recognition of one’s own cultural influences upon values, beliefs, and judgments, as well as the influences derived from the professional’s work culture”. (Gilbert, Goode, and Dunne, nd.) [NCCC | Foundations of Cultural & Linguistic Competence \(georgetown.edu\)](http://georgetown.edu).
 - ~ **Cultural brokering:** Cultural brokering has been defined as “ the act of bridging, linking or mediating between groups or persons of different cultural backgrounds for the purpose of reducing conflict or producing change.” (Jezewski, 1990). [National Center for Cultural Competence \(georgetown.edu\)](http://georgetown.edu).
 - ~ **Cultural competence:** requires that organizations have a defined set of values and principles, and demonstrate behaviors, attitudes, policies, and structures that enable them to work effectively cross-culturally, have the capacity to:

Appendix

- (1) value diversity,
- (2) conduct self-assessment,
- (3) manage the dynamics of difference,
- (4) acquire and institutionalize cultural knowledge, and
- (5) adapt to the diversity and cultural contexts of communities they serve, and
 - Incorporate the above into all aspects of policymaking, administration, practice, and service delivery and systematically involve consumers, key stakeholders, and communities.
 - Cultural competence is a developmental process that evolves over an extended period of time. Individuals, organizations, and systems are at various levels of awareness, knowledge, and skills along the cultural competence continuum. (Bronheim and Goode, 2013). [What is Cultural Competence & How is it Measured?](#) (diversityofficermagazine.com).

- ~ **Cultural humility:** Tervalon and Murray-Garcia coined this term in a 1998 article, in which they conclude “Cultural humility incorporates a lifelong commitment to self-evaluation and critique, to redressing the power imbalances in the physician-patient dynamic and to developing mutually beneficial and non-paternalistic partnerships with communities on behalf of individuals and defined populations.”
- ~ **Disability culture:** as a unique cultural expression of advocacy and acceptance. Create pathways where unpacking ableism, intersectionality and the history of advocacy and self-advocacy activated in the passage of several federal and local laws, including the IDEA.

- **Diversity:** The celebration of difference. - The recognition and celebration of differences. - Acknowledging the uniqueness of identity and thinking and valuing both. - The alignment and interweaving of a variety of dimensions of these differences.
- **Equity:** Equal access to opportunities to reach full talent potential.
 - ~ Ensuring everyone has access to the resources they need to be successful, which may not be the same for each individual.
 - ~ Equipping the individual for success.
 - ~ Aligning disparities in access.
- **Inclusion:** Inclusion is the meaningful representation and consideration of diverse groups. It is not enough to have simply different types of people at the table. We must take into account people’s specific cultural needs and undo systems of oppression. Meaningful inclusion interrogates the systemic issues that impact diverse groups through including representatives who can speak to barrier and inform progress from their position of lived expertise.

Appendix

C - Presentations

- **Facilitator's Guide**
 - Using Your Story to Teach - Part I (Finding Your Story)
 - Using Your Story to Teach - Part II (Developing Your Story)

D - Resources Used Throughout the Toolkit

- **Commonly Used Acronyms**
- **Facilitating the Discussion After the Presentation**
- **Family Involvement Self-Assessment**
- **Storyboard Template**
- **Story Rubric**
- **Viewing Guide**
- **Visualize Your Story**
- **Who's Who in your state**

COMMONLY USED ACRONYMS

AABR	Automated auditory brainstem response (Hearing test)	CHNA	Community Health Network Area
AAP	American Academy of Pediatrics	CFR	Code of Federal Regulations
ACCESS	Associate Degree Early Childhood Teacher Educators	CI	Cochlear Implant
ACF	Administration for Children & Families	CMS	Center for Medicaid & Medicare Services
ADA	Americans with Disabilities Act	COTA	Certified Occupational Therapist
ADD	Attention Deficit Disorder	CP	Cerebral Palsy
ADHD	Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder	CPC	Community Partnerships for Children
AMCHP	Association of Maternal Child Health Programs	CPI	Consumer Price Index
AOTA	American Occupational Therapy Association	CSEFEL	Center on the Social and Emotional Foundations for Early Learning
APR	Annual Performance Report	CSHCN	Children with Special Health Care Needs
APTA	American Physical Therapy Association	CTF	Children's Trust Fund
ASD	Autism Spectrum Disorder	CQI	Continuous Quality Improvement
ASHA	American Speech-Language Hearing Association	CSPD	Comprehensive System of Personnel Development
ASTHVI	Association of State and Tribal Home Visiting Initiatives	DaSy	Center for IDEA Early Childhood Data Systems
AT	Assistive technology	DCF	Department for Children & Families
AUCD	Association of University Centers on Disabilities	DCYF	Department of Youth and Families
AV	Audio Visual	DEC	Division for Early Childhood of CEC
AVT	Auditory Verbal Therapy	DD	Developmental Disability
BD	Behavioral Disability	DDS	Department of Developmental Services
BIP	Behavioral Intervention Plan	DESE	Department of Elementary & Secondary Education
BSEA	Bureau of Special Education Appeals	DLC	Disability Law Center
CAEP	Council for the Accreditation of Educator Preparation	DMA	Division of Medical Assistance (Medicaid)
CAPTA	Child Abuse Prevention & Treatment Act	DMH	Department of Mental Health
CBHI	Children's Behavioral Health Initiative	DNR	Do Not Resuscitate
CCR&R	Child Care Resource & Referral Agency	DOI	Division of Insurance
CCSSO	Council of Chief State School Officers	DPH	Department of Public Health
CDC	Centers for Disease Control and Prevention	DS	Developmental Specialist
CEC	Council for Exceptional Children	DTA	Department of Transitional Assistance
CEEDAR	Collaboration for Effective Educator Development, Accountability and Reform	DV	Domestic Violence
CEELO	Center on Enhancing Early Learning Outcomes	EC	Early Childhood
CHEA	Council for Higher Education Accreditation	ECE	Early Childhood Education
		ECO	Early Childhood Outcomes
		ECPC	Early Childhood Personnel Center
		ECO	Early Childhood Outcome

ECSE	Early Childhood Special Education
ECTA	Early Childhood Technical Assistance Center
EDC	Education Development Center
edTPA	Education Teacher Performance Assessment
EEC	Early Education and Care
EI	Early Intervention
ED	Emotional Disability
EHS	Early Head Start
EPSDT	Early Periodic Screening Diagnosis and Treatment
ESEA	Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965
ESSA	Every Student Succeeds Act
FAFSA	Free Application for Federal Student Aid
FAPE	Free Appropriate Public Education
FBA	Functional Behavioral Assessment
FE	Family Engagement
FERPA	Family Education Rights and Privacy Act
FFP	Federal Financial Participation
FR	Federal Register
FV	Family Voices Organization
GPRA	Government Performance and Results Act
HBCU	Historically Black Colleges and Universities
HECSE	Higher Education Consortium for Special Education
HHS	Health and Human Services
HIPAA	Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act
HLPs	CEC High Leverage Practices
HMO	Health Maintenance Organization
ICC	Interagency Coordinating Council
IDD	Intellectual Developmental Disability
IDEA	Individuals with Disabilities Education Act
IEE	Independent Education Evaluation
IEP	Individualized Education Program
IEU	Intermediate Educational Unit
IFS	Impact Family Scale
IFSP	Individualized Family Service Plan
IHE	Institute of Higher Education
IHP	Individualized Health Plan
ISEI	International Society on Early Intervention
ISP	Individual Service Plan
ITCA	IDEA Infant Toddler Coordinators Association
ITP	Individual Transition Plan

IYC	Infants and Young Children
JEI	Journal of Early Intervention
LD	Learning Disability
LDA	Learning Disability Association
LEA	Local Education Agency (or school system)
LEND	Leadership Education in Neurodevelopmental and related Disabilities
LRE	Least Restrictive (educational) Environment
MCH	Maternal Child Health
MCHB	Maternal Child Health Bureau
MSIP	USDOE OSEP's Monitoring and State Improvement Planning Division
NAECTE	National Association of Early Childhood Teacher Educators
NAEYC	National Association for the Education of Young Children
NASP	National Association of School Psychologists
NBPTS	National Board for Professional Teaching Standards
NCLB	No Child Left Behind
NCPMI	National Center for Pyramid Model Innovation
NCSEAM	National Center for Special Education Accountability and Monitoring
NDRN	National Disability Rights Network
NHSA	National Head Start Association
NICHD	National Institute of Child Health and Human Development
NICHY	National Information Center for Children and Youth with Disabilities
NICU	Neonatal Intensive Care Unit
NIH	National Institutes of Health
NIMH	National Institute of Mental Health
NP	Nurse Practitioner
NPRM	Notice of Proposed Rule-Making
NVLD	Non-Verbal Learning Disability
OAE	Otoacoustics emissions (hearing test)
O & M	Orientation & Mobility (for visually impaired)
OCD	Obsessive Compulsive Disorder
OCR	Office of Civil Rights (U.S. DOJ)
ODD	Oppositional Defiance Disorder
OEC	Office of Early Childhood
OEL	Office of Early Learning
OMB	Office of Management and Budget

OSC	Office of the State Comptroller	SEA	State Education Agency
OSEP	Office of Special Education Programs (U.S. DOE)	SEAC	Special Education Advisory Council
OSERS	Office of Special Education & Rehabilitative Services (U.S. DOE)	Section 504	Section of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973
OT	Occupational Therapy	SEPAC	Special Education Parent Advisory Council
NASDSE	National Association of State Directors of Special Education	SI	Sensory Integration
NASDTEC	National Association of State Directors of Teacher Education and Certification	SIG	State Improvement Grant
NGA	National Governors Association	SIMR	State Identified Measurable Result
NHSA	National Head Start Association	SLP	Speech/ Language Pathologist
p2p	Parent to Parent	SPDG	State Personnel Development Grant
P2P	Power to the Profession	SPE	or SPED Special Education
PA	Physician's Assistant	SPEDPAC	Special Education Parent Advisory Council
PAC	Parent Advisory Council	SPP	State Performance Plan
PART B	Special Education (ages 3 to 22) of IDEA	SSA	Social Security Administration
Part B 619	Section 619 of IDEA (3-5 years)	SSDI	Social Security Disability Income
PART C	Early Intervention (birth to three) of IDEA	SSI	Supplemental Security Income
PBIS	Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports	SSIP	State Systemic Improvement Plan
PCA	Personal Care Attendant	SSP	Specialty Service Provider (Autism, Teacher of the Deaf, Teacher of the Blind)
PDG-B5	Preschool Development Grants Birth to 5	STEM	Science, Technology, Engineering and Math
PE	Physical Education	STEMI2E2	STEM Innovation for Inclusion in Early Education Center
PQA	Program Quality Assurance	SW	Social Worker
PT	Physical Therapy	TA	Technical Assistance
PTA	Parent Teacher Association	TANF	Temporary Assistance for Needy Families
PTI	Parent Training and Information	TASH	The Association for Persons with Severe Handicaps
PTO	Parent Teacher Organizations	TED	Teacher Education Division of CEC
PTSD	Post Traumatic Stress Disorder	TECSE	Topics in Early Childhood Special Education Journal
RDA	Results Driven Accountability	TESE	Teacher Education and Special Education Journal
RFA	Request for Application	Title V	of the Social Security Act administered by DHHS
RFI	Request for Interest	TOD	Teacher of the Deaf or Hard of Hearing
RFP	Request for Proposal	TTY	Telephone Typewriter
RFR	Request for Response	TVI	Teacher of the Visually Impaired
RN	Registered Nurse	UCEDD	University Center for Excellence in Developmental Disabilities
RPs	DEC Recommended Practices	USDOE	U.S. Department of Education
RSA	Rehabilitation Services Administration	VR	Vocational Rehabilitation
RTP	Research to Practice	WIOA	Workforce Innovation and Opportunities Act
SAMSA	Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration	YC	Young Children
SAC	State Advisory Council	YEC	Young Exceptional Children
SAP	State Advisory Panel	ZTT	Zero to Three

FACILITATING THE DISCUSSION AFTER A PRESENTATION

After you tell your story, it is time to think about the questions to ask as follow-up.

1. Prepare a list of questions in advance, so you are prepared after your presentation in case the audience does not ask questions. (suggestions listed below)
2. Decide before your presentation if you will allow questions during your presentation, often times this is distracting and may lead you off topic or in a different direction.
3. Make sure you let your audience know in advance when you prefer to answer questions.
4. Suggest that they write down their questions during your presentation, so they do not forget.
5. If you are presenting using a virtual platform, decide if you want them to ask question in chat or wait until the end (sometimes, this can also be distracting to you and others).
6. The key is to communicate with your audience.

Facilitating the discussion after the presentation: Develop a list of questions to ask (or question prompts). It is not enough to ask the question; you have to know **why** you are asking it and how you hope the question will enhance the participants' learning experience.

- **Fact Finding Questions** “Who, What, When, Where, Why, and How questions” At the end of a training, facilitators often ask these kinds of questions to get a sense for what the participants took away.
- **Illuminative Questions** are designed to help participants connect their own relationship to what is being discussed. These are often the questions that expose a participant's emotion regarding the subject. An illuminative question will often have the word **“feel”** in it as in “How does this make you feel?” or “What do you find most challenging about the new system?”
- **Introspective Questions** help participants examine their own beliefs, values, and assumptions: They are the **so what** questions that help people make sense of situations. They are the questions that demand personal reflection. “How does this change how you want to show up as a practitioner?”
- **Decision-Making Questions** When you need a group to take action, using decision-making questions can help move the process along. Decision-making questions are like: “What do we need to start, stop and continue to make this a success?” or “What are the next steps?”

The key to being good at asking questions is being **skilled at listening**- at having a natural curiosity about what others think. Strong question-askers have a real desire to dig deeper into others' perceptions and beliefs. When participants know that you are not just asking questions for the sake of asking questions but because you actually want to hear the answers – you will create a learning environment that is engaged and energized.

FAMILY INVOLVEMENT SELF-ASSESSMENT

Use this checklist to assess your readiness to become involved in personnel development efforts. These considerations will help you evaluate whether or not this is the right opportunity for you at this time.

Questions to consider before committing to be involved:

	Do I know?	Is this right for me?	MORE QUESTIONS TO ASK
OPPORTUNITY			
What is the opportunity? • Local, state or national			
• Stakeholder, advisory group or other			
Is this a new opportunity or existing?			
Is this time limited (topic specific) or ongoing?			
What is the impact? • Local state or national			
ROLE			
What is my role?			
• Family faculty/co-trainer/presenter			
• Will I represent my own experience or share the family perspective?			
Is there background information that I should know to address the topic?			
Is there a training or classes that I can attend?			
What is the expectation of family?			
How many other families are involved?			
COMMITMENT			
Where are the meetings or classes held?			
• Is there an option to participate virtually?			
What is the time commitment? • Per week/monthly/quarterly			
How far in advance are the meetings or classes scheduled?			
How far in advance is the agenda distributed?			

	Do I know?	Is this right for me?	MORE QUESTIONS TO ASK
RESOURCES			
Is there a reimbursement mechanism?			
What is covered?			
• Childcare			
• Travel costs (parking, tolls, mileage)			
• Stipend for my time			
• Preparation time reimbursed			
Do I know how to request reimbursement?			
What is the turnaround time for reimbursement?			
Where do I go if I have specific questions?			
• Person or website			
Do I have a support network at home to allow me time away?			
Do I have enough information to make an informed decision about this opportunity?			
What if I decide this is not right for me?			
Do I know the process of resigning?			
Are there other things to consider?			
Do I need to find out more before making a decision? If so, what?			

USING YOUR STORY TO TEACH

Storyboard Template

Your story should touch on a personal experience with early childhood services for your child. It could address the positive impact of well-trained personnel or the difficulties in working with personnel who are not comfortable partnering with families.

Your story should demonstrate success or challenge highlighting one or more of the [EI/ECSE Standards](#).

Use the storyboard template to guide you in crafting your story. Alternatively, put this format on a large piece of paper or whiteboard and use sticky notes so that you can organize and revise your ideas.

TOPIC:	STANDARD:
EXAMPLES:	VISUALS:
TURNING POINT:	SOLUTION:

USING YOUR STORY TO TEACH

Story Rubric

Use the rubric to make sure you have all the elements of a good story. Practice telling your story to a friend or mentor. Ask the listener to fill out the rubric and provide feedback.

CRITERIA	NEEDS WORK	GOOD	NOTES
Purpose or goal of the story is clear.			
Intended audience(s) is clear for this story.			
Story illustrates EI/ECSE standard.			
Visual aids, creative wording, or audience hooks are used to illustrate your message.			
Are there any photos or videos that show others? <i>If so, you will need their permission to share.</i>			
Powerful examples are used: a challenge, hurdle, setback, growth, triumph or success. <i>(i.e. "transformative consequences")</i>			
The story has a strong ending that teaches specific outcomes. The audience has solutions or suggestions to take away.			
Language is clear and understandable. No jargon or acronyms that are not defined.			
Comments:			

USING YOUR STORY TO TEACH

Viewing Guide

- Reflect on the questions as you watch the video:
["Moth Story: The Accident by Ophira Eisenberg"](#)
 - What imagery make 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?
- Brainstorm some experiences you have had as the family member of a child with a disability that you might be able to use to illustrate a point.

REFLECT		BRAINSTORM
Imagery		
Humor		
Emotion		
What did you learn?		

USING YOUR STORY TO TEACH

Visualize Your Story

ACTIVITY 1: Close your eyes and think about your experiences in early childhood intervention. Give yourself 2 minutes to look through your experiences. Use a timer or just open your eyes when you are ready.

Is there one experience that stands out to you? Maybe when things were going well? When things were going wrong? Focus on one moment in time along your journey.

Picture in your mind what was happening. What did 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?

Use the template to jot down all of your visualizations:

WHAT DID YOU SEE?	WHAT DID YOU HEAR?	WHAT WERE YOU FEELING?
WHO WAS THERE WITH YOU?	WHERE WERE YOU?	WHEN WAS IT HAPPENING?
WHAT WENT WELL?	WHAT COULD HAVE BEEN DIFFERENT?	WHAT DID YOU LEARN?

ACTIVITY 2: Remember that best practices and standards are already embedded in your stories. Check off one or more of the standards below that relate back to your story. Which one will you focus on when you tell your story? Which standard best conveys the skills, strategies, or guiding principles that are illustrated in your story?

You can check the boxes next to the standards that your story best illustrates.

EI/ECSE Standards

Standard 1: Child Development and Early Learning

Components:

- 1.1 Understand the impact that different theories and philosophies of early learning and development have on assessment, curriculum, intervention, and instruction decisions.
- 1.2 Apply knowledge of normative sequences of early development, individual differences, and families' social, cultural, and linguistic diversity to support each child's development and learning across contexts.
- 1.3 Apply knowledge of biological and environmental factors that may support or constrain children's early development and learning as they plan and implement early intervention and instruction.
- 1.4 Understand characteristics, etiologies, and individual differences within and across the range of abilities, including developmental delays and disabilities, their potential impact on children's early development and learning, and implications for assessment, curriculum, instruction, and intervention.

Standard 2: Partnering with Families

Components:

- 2.1 Apply knowledge of family-centered practices, family systems theory, and the changing needs and priorities in families' lives to develop trusting, respectful, affirming, and culturally responsive partnerships with all families that allow for the mutual exchange of knowledge and information.
- 2.2 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.
- 2.3 Engage families in identifying their strengths, priorities, and concerns; support families to achieve the goals they have for their family and their young child's development and learning; and promote families' competence and confidence during assessment, individualized planning, intervention, instruction, and transition processes.

Standard 3: Collaboration and Teaming

Components:

- 3.1** Apply teaming models, skills, and processes, including appropriate uses of technology, when collaborating and communicating with families; professionals representing multiple disciplines, skills, expertise, and roles; and community partners and agencies.
- 3.2** Use a variety of collaborative strategies when working with other adults that are evidence-based, appropriate to the task, culturally and linguistically responsive, and take into consideration the environment and service delivery approach.
- 3.3** 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.

Standard 4: Assessment Procedures

Components:

- 4.1** Understand the purposes of formal and informal assessment, including ethical and legal considerations, and use this information to choose developmentally, culturally and linguistically appropriate, valid, reliable tools and methods that are responsive to the characteristics of the young child, family, and program
- 4.2** Develop and administer informal assessments and/or select and use valid, reliable formal assessments using evidence-based practices, including technology, in partnership with families and other professionals.
- 4.3** Analyze, interpret, document, and share assessment information using a strengths-based approach with families and other professionals.
- 4.4** In collaboration with families and other team members, use assessment data to determine eligibility, develop child and family-based outcomes/goals, plan for interventions and instruction, and monitor progress to determine efficacy of programming.

Standard 5: Application of Curriculum Frameworks in the Planning of Meaningful Learning Experience

Components:

- 5.1** Collaborate with families and other professionals in identifying an evidence based curriculum addressing developmental and content domains to design and facilitate meaningful and culturally responsive learning experiences that support the unique abilities and needs of all children and families.
- 5.2** Use knowledge of early childhood curriculum frameworks, developmental and academic content knowledge, and related pedagogy to plan and ensure equitable access to universally designed, developmentally appropriate, and challenging learning experiences in natural and inclusive environments.

Standard 6: Using Responsive and Reciprocal Interactions, Interventions, and Instruction

Components:

- 6.1** In partnership with families, identify systematic, responsive, and intentional evidence-based practices and use such practices with fidelity to support young children’s learning and development across all developmental and academic content domains.
- 6.2** Engage in reciprocal partnerships with families and other professionals to facilitate responsive adult-child interactions, interventions, and instruction in support of child learning and development.
- 6.3** Engage in ongoing planning and use flexible and embedded instructional and environmental arrangements and appropriate materials to support the use of interactions, interventions, and instruction addressing developmental and academic content domains, which are adapted to meet the needs of each and every child and their family.
- 6.4** Promote young children’s social and emotional competence and communication, and proactively plan and implement function-based interventions to prevent and address challenging behaviors.
- 6.5** Identify and create multiple opportunities for young children to develop and learn play skills and engage in meaningful play experiences independently and with others across contexts.
- 6.6** Use responsive interactions, interventions, and instruction with sufficient intensity and types of support across activities, routines, and environments to promote child learning and development and facilitate access, participation, and engagement in natural environments and inclusive settings.
- 6.7** Plan for, adapt, and improve approaches to interactions, interventions, and instruction based on multiple sources of data across a range of natural environments and inclusive settings.

Standard 7: Professionalism and Ethical Practice

Components:

- 7.1** Engage with the profession of EI/ECSE by participating in local, regional, national, and/or international activities and professional organizations.
- 7.2** Engage in ongoing reflective practice and access evidence-based information to improve their own practices.
- 7.3** Exhibit leadership skills in advocating for improved outcomes for young children, families, and the profession, including the promotion of and use of evidence-based practices and decision-making.
- 7.4** Practice within ethical and legal policies and procedures.

WHO'S WHO IN YOUR STATE

Filling your toolbox

Identify EI/ECSE and related resources in your state



What is the lead agency for EI in your state?	
Who is the Part C Coordinator ?	
Who is the Part B/619 Coordinator ?	
Who provides professional development for early intervention in your state?	
Who is the Chair of your State Interagency Coordinating Council (ICC) ?	
Who are the parents on the State ICC?	
Who is the Personnel Preparation Representative on the State ICC?	
Who is the chair of the State Advisory Panel (SAP) or Special Education Advisory Council (SEAC) ?	
Where can you find information about early intervention in your state? Number of children served, eligibility criteria.	
What higher education programs provide EI/ECSE personnel preparation in your state?	
Does your state offer an EI Certification or Licensure ?	
Where is the UCFDD located ? (University Center of Excellence in Developmental Disabilities)	
Where is the LEND Program Located ? (Leadership Education in Neurodevelopmental and Related Disabilities)	
What is the name of the Parent Center in your state ? (Parent Training & Information Center – PTI)	
Where is Parent to Parent located in your state?	
Where is Family Voices located in your state ? F2F Health Information Center	
Are there other family leaders or family organizations that may assist you with your action plan? Please list	
Are there professional associations or organizations that may assist? (State DEC Subdivision, State or local coordination association)	



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263 Farmington Avenue, Farmington, CT 06030-6222 • 860.679.1500 • infocedd@uchc.edu

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