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Erasmus+ Programme
of the European Union



Module 5: The Transdisciplinary Model in Early Intervention



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► This module will provide a short overview of:



- The rationale for a team model for EI services
- The characteristics of three different team models
- The rationale for a transdisciplinary team approach
- Strategies for building and maintaining an effective EI transdisciplinary team that includes the family



► 5.1 Early Intervention, Relationships, and Teaming

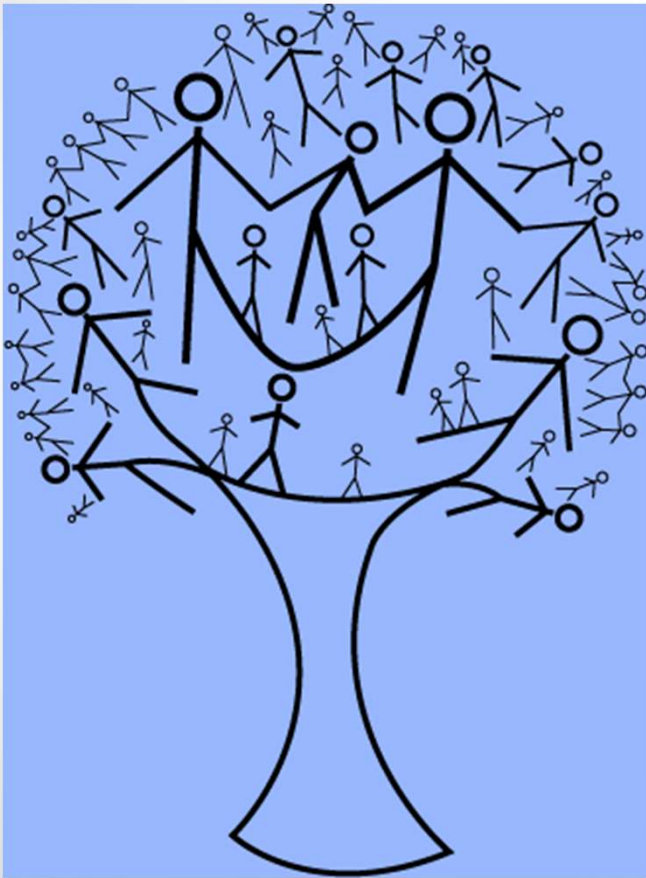


- 5.1.1 Definition of Early Intervention (EI)
- 5.1.2 Why EI is delivered in teams
- 5.1.3 Evidence-based practices in collaboration and teaming



► What is Early Intervention (EI)?

The different types of parenting supports . . .



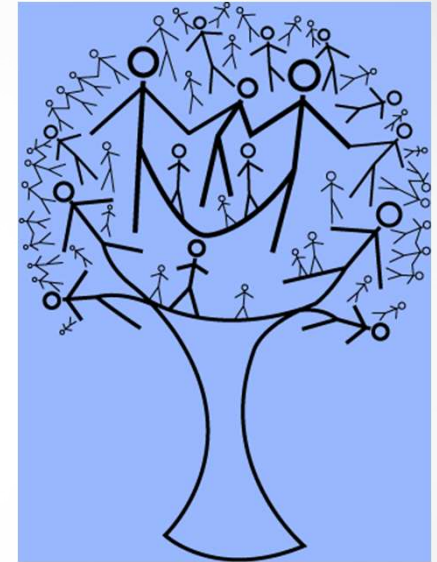
- provided by early childhood practitioners and other social network members . . .
- that provide parents the time, energy, knowledge and skills . . .
- to engage their children in everyday child learning opportunities . . .
- that promote and enhance both child and parent confidence and competence.

-- Dunst, 2000, 2007a, 2017; Dunst & Espe-Sherwindt, 2017



► Early Intervention = Relationships

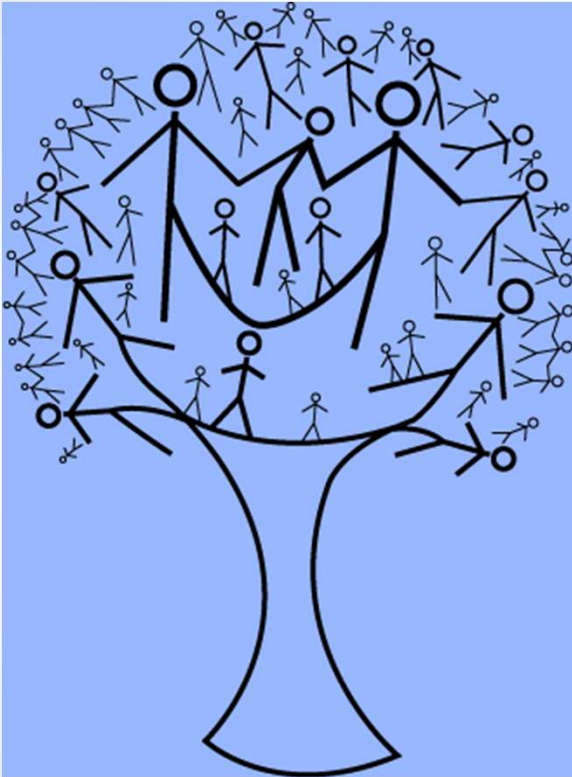
- EI uses a family-centered approach
 - A family-centered approach is a way of thinking
 - A family-centered approach uses practices that
 - Respect the values and priorities of families
 - Identify and build on child and family strengths
 - Build competence, confidence and resilience
 - Respect parents as the most important decision-makers
 - A family-centered approach requires that we view families as partners in the early intervention process



-- Raver & Childress, 2015



► Early Intervention = Relationships



- The field of Early Intervention is a relationship-based discipline
 - Between parents/family members/caregivers and the child
 - Between the family and the community
 - Between families and their early intervention providers
 - Between the providers themselves
- The quality of the relationships and collaboration among the adults affects the outcomes and success of EI

-- DEC, 2014: Raver & Childress, 2015



► From the beginning, EI has involved many disciplines



- The needs of young children and families typically extend beyond a single discipline
 - Educators, therapists, social workers, psychologists, nurses, physicians, etc.
- Working together helps the professionals collaborate and coordinate in order to meet the needs and respond to the priorities of each family
- Working together increases the chance of successful outcomes
- Working together = working as a **TEAM**



► Which collaborative and teaming practices are currently supported by evidence?



► Division for Early Childhood. (2014). DEC recommended practices in early intervention/early childhood special education 2014. Retrieved from <http://www.dec-sped.org/recommendedpractices>



“The DEC Recommended Practices were developed to provide guidance to practitioners and families about the most effective ways to improve the learning outcomes and promote the development of young children, birth through five years of age, who have or are at-risk for developmental delays or disabilities. The purpose of this document is to help bridge the gap between research and practice by highlighting those practices that have been shown to result in better outcomes for young children with disabilities, their families, and the personnel who serve them . . . The DEC Recommended Practices are based on the best-available empirical evidence as well as the wisdom and experience of the field.”





► DEC Recommended Practices: Teaming and Collaboration

“Educational programs and services for young children who have or are at risk for developmental delays and disabilities, by their nature, always involve more than one adult. The quality of the relationships and interactions among these adults affects the success of these programs. Teaming and collaboration practices are those that promote and sustain collaborative adult partnerships, relationships, and ongoing interactions to ensure that programs and services achieve desired child and family outcomes and goals. It is a given that the family is an essential member of the team and that the team includes practitioners from multiple disciplines as needed.”

Division for Early Childhood. (2014). DEC recommended practices in early intervention/early childhood special education 2014. Retrieved from <http://www.dec-sped.org/recommendedpractices>





► DEC Recommended Practices: Teaming and Collaboration

TC1. Practitioners representing multiple disciplines and families work together as a team to plan and implement supports and services to meet the unique needs of each child and family.

TC2. Practitioners and families work together as a team to systematically and regularly exchange expertise, knowledge, and information to build team capacity and jointly solve problems, plan, and implement interventions.

TC3. Practitioners use communication and group facilitation strategies to enhance team functioning and interpersonal relationships with and among team members.

Division for Early Childhood. (2014). DEC recommended practices in early intervention/early childhood special education 2014. Retrieved from <http://www.dec-sped.org/recommendedpractices>





► DEC Recommended Practices: Teaming and Collaboration

TC4. Team members assist each other to discover and access community-based services and other informal and formal resources to meet family-identified child or family needs.

TC5. Practitioners and families may collaborate with each other to identify one practitioner from the team who serves as the primary liaison between the family and other team members based on child and family priorities and needs.

Division for Early Childhood. (2014). DEC recommended practices in early intervention/early childhood special education 2014. Retrieved from <http://www.dec-sped.org/recommendedpractices>



► 5.2 What is a Team?



- 5.2.1 Definition of a team
- 5.2.2 Three different teaming models
- 5.3.3 Comparing the three models



► What is a team?



► What is a team?



<https://youtu.be/-SS0HHbFOrM>



► What is a team?



Putting people together in a room and calling them a team
does NOT make them a team!



► What is a team?

- “A small group of people with complementary skills, common purposes, goals, and approaches for which they hold themselves accountable” (Katzenbach & Smith, 1993)
- “Two or more individuals who (1) are aware of their positive interdependence as they strive to achieve mutual goals, (2) interact while they do so, (3) are aware of who is and is not a member of the team, and (4) have specific roles or functions to perform” (Johnson & Johnson, 1994)
- “A set of interdependent individuals with unique skills and perspectives who interact directly to achieve their mutual goal” (Friend & Cook, 2013)



► What is a team?

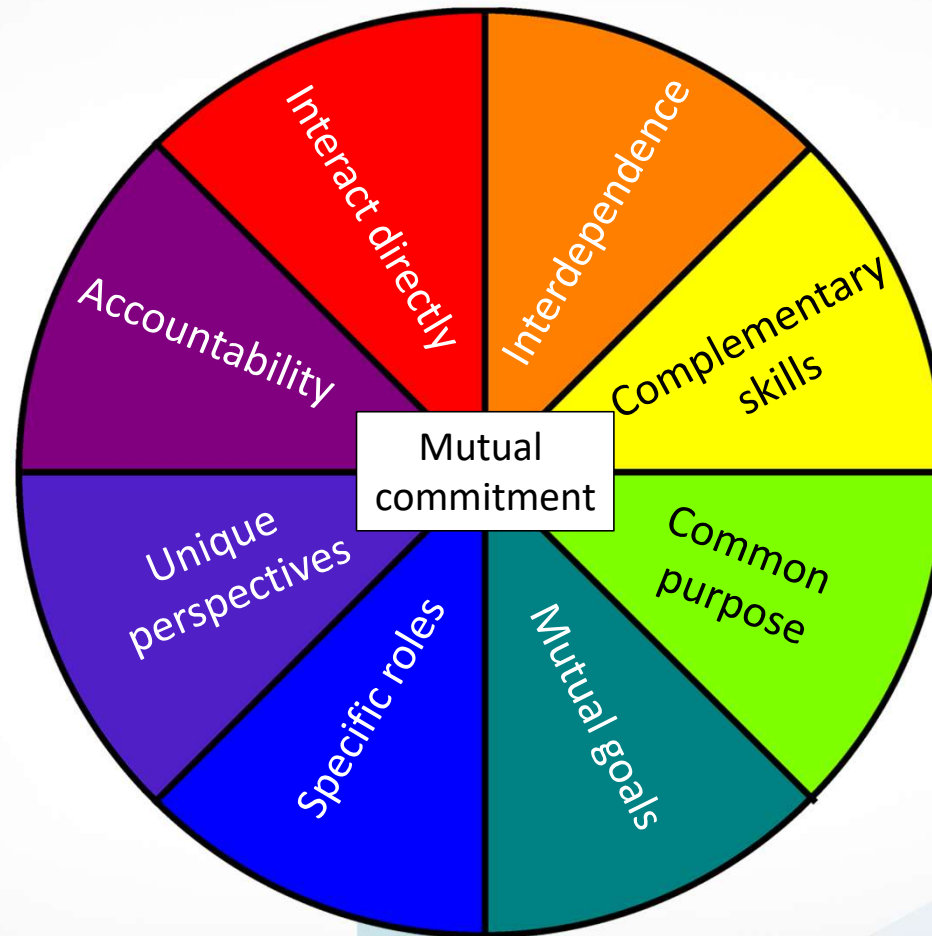
- A group of people with a full set of complementary skills required to complete a task, job, or project.
- Team members (1) operate with a high degree of interdependence, (2) share authority and responsibility for self-management, (3) are accountable for the collective performance, and (4) work toward a common goal and shared rewards(s). A team becomes more than just a collection of people when a strong sense of mutual commitment creates synergy, thus generating performance greater than the sum of the performance of its individual members.



<http://www.businessdictionary.com/definition/team.html>



► Key terms to remember from the definitions



► Do not forget!

- The family is a member of the team!
- Each family comes to us with
 - A unique perspective/knowledge
 - Skills that complement ours
 - A specific role
 - As the parent of the child
 - As the final decision-maker
- Together with the family
 - We are interdependent
 - We are accountable to each other
 - We share a common purpose (the well-being of the child and family)
 - We develop mutual goals
 - We are constantly interacting





► Three Models of EI Teams

Most EI programs use variations of three team models

- Multidisciplinary
 - Professionals from different disciplines work independently with limited opportunities for collaboration and communication
- Interdisciplinary
 - Professionals from different disciplines typically conduct assessments separately, do share information, may plan together, but deliver their own discipline-specific intervention
- Transdisciplinary
 - Professionals make every effort to work together rather than in isolation

-- Raver & Childress, 2015



► Let's dig deeper into these three models



- In the next eight slides, we'll take a closer look at the differences among these three models
- As we are comparing the models, think about these two questions:
 - Which model fits best with current practices and evidence in early intervention?
 - In which model are families true partners and members of the team?



► Parent Participation

Multidisciplinary	Interdisciplinary	Transdisciplinary
Parents meet with individual team members	Parents meet with team or team representative	Parents are full, active and participating members of the team

-- Woodruff and Hanson, 1987



► Assessment

Multidisciplinary	Interdisciplinary	Transdisciplinary
Separate assessments by team members	Separate assessments by team members	Team members and family conduct a comprehensive assessment together

-- Woodruff and Hanson, 1987



► Service Plan Development

Multidisciplinary	Interdisciplinary	Transdisciplinary
Team members develop separate plans for their own discipline	Team members share their separate plans with one another	Team members and the family develop a plan together based upon family priorities, needs and resources

-- Woodruff and Hanson, 1987



► Service Plan Implementation

Multidisciplinary	Interdisciplinary	Transdisciplinary
Team members implement the part of the plan related to their discipline	Team members implement their section of the plan and incorporate other sections where possible	A primary service provider is assigned to implement the plan with the family

-- Woodruff and Hanson, 1987



► Service Plan Responsibility

Multidisciplinary	Interdisciplinary	Transdisciplinary
Team members are responsible for implementing their section of the plan	Team members are responsible for sharing information with one another as well as for implementing their section of the plan	Team members are responsible and accountable for how the primary service provider implements the plan

-- Woodruff and Hanson, 1987



► Lines of Communication

Multidisciplinary	Interdisciplinary	Transdisciplinary
Informal lines	Periodic case-specific team meetings	Regular team meetings where continuous transfer of information, knowledge and skills are shared among team members

-- Woodruff and Hanson, 1987



► Guiding Philosophy

Multidisciplinary	Interdisciplinary	Transdisciplinary
Team members recognize the importance of contributions from other disciplines	Team members are willing and able to develop, share and be responsible for providing services that are a part of the total plan	Team members make a commitment to teach, learn, and work together across discipline boundaries to implement a unified plan

-- Woodruff and Hanson, 1987



► Staff Development

Multidisciplinary	Interdisciplinary	Transdisciplinary
Independent and within the team member's discipline	Independent within and outside of the team member's discipline	An integral component of team meetings for learning across disciplines and team building

-- Woodruff and Hanson, 1987





- Which model fits best with current practices and evidence in early intervention?
- In which model are families true partners and members of the team?



► Three Model of EI Teams

- Multidisciplinary
- Interdisciplinary
- Transdisciplinary

- Professionals make every effort to work together rather than in isolation
- Parents are full, active and participating members of the team

A large green circle with a thick green border and a green checkmark inside. The word "Answer" is written in black text across the center of the circle.

Answer



5.3 Key Concepts, Benefits and Qualities of Effective EI Transdisciplinary Teams



- 5.3.1 Key concepts
- 5.3.2 Benefits
- 5.3.3 Qualities



► A New Way of Working Together

TRANSDISCIPLINARY APPROACH TO SERVICES

- Purpose: In order to accomplish effective collaboration among all members of the team, this best practice model of service delivery encourages a team to enlarge its common core of knowledge and the competency of each team member.



-- Connecticut Birth to Three System, 2014



► Key Concepts in a Transdisciplinary Approach to EI

- The sharing of roles across disciplinary and agency boundaries so that communication, interaction, and cooperation are maximized among team members
- The commitment of its members to teach, learn, and work together to implement coordinated services
- The development of a mutual vision or “shared meaning” among the team, with the family considered to be a key member of the team (King et al., 2009)



► Key Concepts in a Transdisciplinary Approach to EI

- The transdisciplinary process involves
 - Seeing the child as a whole, not a collection of specific developmental domains
 - Seeing the child in the context of the family, and the family in the context of the community
 - Sharing in the assessment process (e.g., arena assessment of the child)
 - Selecting functional, integrated, meaningful outcomes as a team (which includes the family)
 - Developing intervention strategies as a team (which includes the family)
 - Systematic sharing of knowledge and skills among the team members
 - Choosing one team member to serve as the primary service provider offering services and support to the family
 - Team members providing support to the primary service provider through consultation and joint visits as needed
 - Meeting frequently and regularly
 - Recognizing that the plan and outcomes “belong” to the family, not to a specific discipline or provider

-- Raver & Childress, 2015



► Benefits of Working Together in This Way in EI

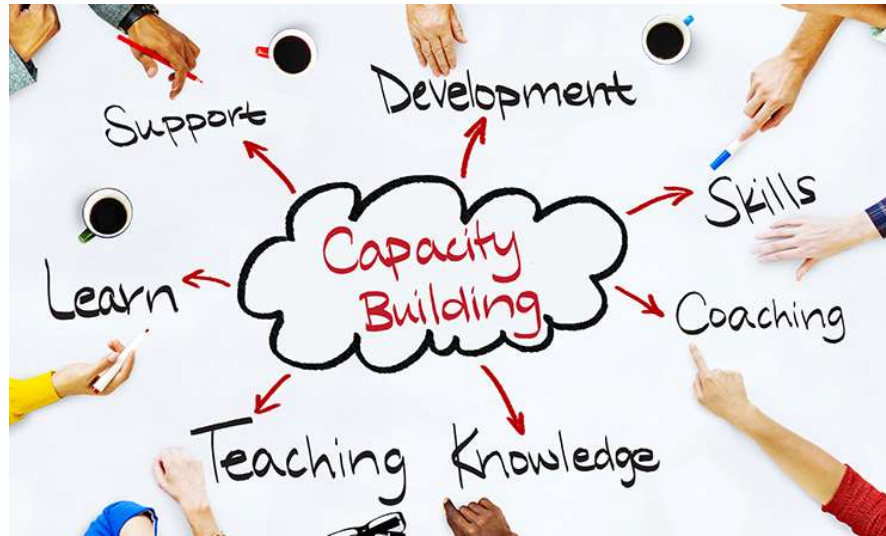
- ↓ intrusion and stress on the family,
- ↓ confusion for the family,
- ↓ fragmentation of services by agencies or developmental domains,
- ↑ more coherent intervention plans and holistic service delivery,
- ↑ efficiency and cost-effectiveness of services, and
- ↑ knowledge and skills for everyone, including the family



-- King et al., 2009



► Benefits of Working Together in This Way in EI



Of all three models, this model is the most likely to build the capacity of the child and each team member (the family AND the professionals)



► Qualities of Effective EI Transdisciplinary Teams

- 1) There is a mission, purpose and goals that all team members understand and accept
- 2) The team has sufficient resources available to them
- 3) Team members have appropriate training, skills, and experience
- 4) The team has an open communication system that encourages diversity of thinking, that manages conflict, and that seeks feedback
- 5) The team spends sufficient time (a) examining team norms, values and beliefs, and (b) fostering the growth of individuals and the team as a whole



-- Briggs, 1993



► Qualities of Effective EI Transdisciplinary Teams

- 6) The team uses an effective problem-solving strategy
- 7) The team establishes high standards and evaluates individual and team performance
- 8) The team builds a climate of trust and mutual support
- 9) One leader is identified or the responsibility is shared appropriately among the team members
- 10) The team is supported by their organization



-- Briggs, 1993



► Qualities of Effective EI Transdisciplinary Teams

1) Mission Statement



- The mission statement reflects the purpose, goals, and philosophy of the team
- The mission statement should be brief, focused and understandable by all (including the family)
- The mission statement is created and revised regularly by the group
- The mission statement reflects the team's values, attitudes and beliefs

2) Resources



- The most effective EI teams have sufficient time, personnel, and resources available to them
- Time is critical.
- Teams need as much time to practice as to perform.
- Practice time includes planning, sharing information and skills, evaluating their own team process.



► Qualities of Effective EI Transdisciplinary Teams

3) Expertise



- Each team member should have a thorough theoretical AND practical knowledge base
- Each team member needs strong clinical skills and experience working with young children and families
- Team members recognize and appreciate the unique contributions of all other team members

4) Communication

- The team develops and implements systems for sharing information, resolving conflict, and recognizing the unique contributions of each member
- Channels of communication (formal and informal) are explicit



-- Briggs, 1993 

► Qualities of Effective EI Transdisciplinary Teams

5) Team Process

- Teams recognize their own unique culture: rules, values, attitudes and beliefs
- A sense of identity and cohesion as a team is nurtured
- The team believes: “None of us is as smart as all of us”



6) Solutions



- The team uses a systematic method for making decisions
 - Identify and thoroughly define the problem →
 - Brainstorm possible solutions →
 - Choose the best alternative →
 - Implement →
 - Evaluate and revise as needed



► Qualities of Effective EI Transdisciplinary Teams

7) Evaluation



- Team members are committed to growing and learning
- Team members evaluate their own operating methods for working together
- Team members are committed to ongoing quality improvement

8) Trust

- Trust is essential
- Trust develops over time
- Without trust and respect, creativity and risk-taking are not likely to emerge



-- Briggs, 1993

► Qualities of Effective EI Transdisciplinary Teams

9) Leadership



- The best leaders create an atmosphere where team members can work effectively together
- The best leaders empower all team members to assume leadership responsibilities so that they can learn and share their skills

10) Support



- The team's agency or institution offers
 - Resources and the opportunities for autonomous decision-making
 - Time and technical assistance for team-building
 - Staff development
 - Support of the team's mission
 - A climate where change can occur

5.4 Key Requirements for Building and Maintaining an EI Transdisciplinary Team



- 5.4.1 Common challenges
- 5.4.2 Stages of team development
- 5.4.3 Ground rules for working together
- 5.4.4 Role clarification
- 5.4.5 Effective communication
- 5.4.6 Using evidence-based practices
- 5.4.7 Regularly reflecting on the process of working together



► Building and Maintaining a Team



<https://youtu.be/4Rd9zQborxI>



► Common Challenges on Any Transdisciplinary Team

- Differing expectations about the purpose of the team
- Differing expectations about the roles of team members
- Fear of losing one's professional identity
- Ineffective communication strategies
- Not knowing how to deal with conflict
- Reluctance to share one's knowledge and skills or lack of confidence in one's knowledge and skills
- Resistance to learning new information and skills

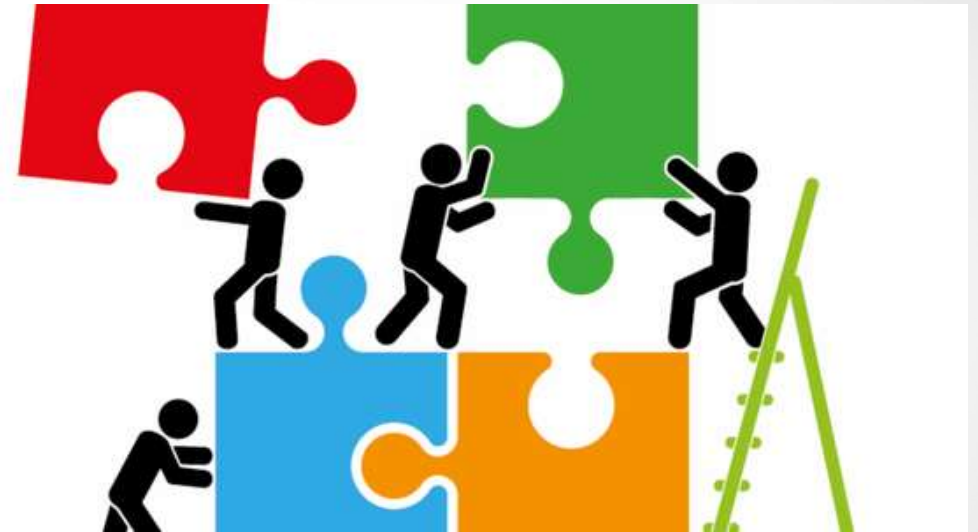
-- King et al., 2009; Raver & Childress, 2015



Key Requirements for Building and Maintaining an EI Transdisciplinary Team



- Time devoted to team development
- Ground rules for working together
- Role clarification
- Effective communication
- Using evidence-based collaboration and teaming practices
- Regularly reflecting on the process of working together



Key Requirements for Building and Maintaining an EI Transdisciplinary Team

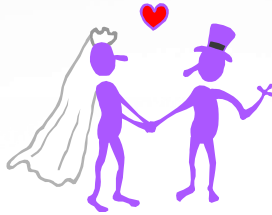


- Time devoted to team development
- Ground rules for working together
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► Time Devoted to Team Development

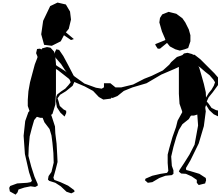
1. Forming



2. Storming



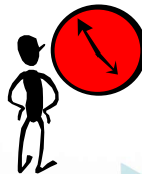
3. Norming



4. Performing



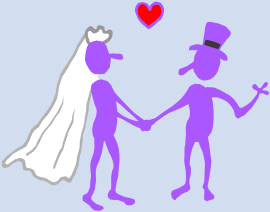
5. Adjourning



Teams go through predictable stages
as they develop
(Tuckman, 1965)



► Forming


	Characteristics	Issues
	Getting acquainted Polite behavior “What’s in it for me?” “Will I fit in?” Some confusion and anxiety	Dependence Fear of the unknown Need for security “Can I trust you?”

- This stage is like a honeymoon – the future looks great – but you haven’t really lived together yet!
- Everybody is on their best behavior.
- Interactions are tentative and superficial.
- Team members are not yet ready to share what they really think.
- Productivity is low.

-- Tuckman, 1965



► Storming

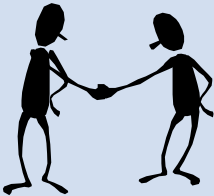
	Characteristics	Issues
	Increased interaction Conflict Frustration Emotions Opinions Power struggles	Challenge to leadership Need to belong Need to assert individuality Need for social interaction Need to take risks

- This stage is key to team development.
- Teams NEED to go through this stage.
- Team members start to take risks and honestly share opinions and emotions.
- Team members realize they might need some “rules” to work together.
- Productivity is low but energy is high!

-- Tuckman, 1965



► Norming


	Characteristics	Issues
	Team spirit Feelings of unity Shared responsibility Group decision-making Cooperation	How will we build cohesion? How will we work together?

- In this stage, teams create the “rules” and procedures for working together.
- The purpose of the team and its mission become clear.
- Roles are clarified.
- Mutual respect and commitment to the team are visible.
- Team members like being part of the team.
- Productivity is increasing.

-- Tuckman, 1965



► Performing

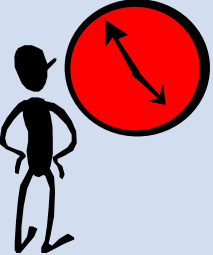
	Characteristics	Issues
	Productivity Maturity Interdependence Problem-solving	Getting the job done Teamwork

- The team produces results. The team works hard and yet still has fun.
- The team uses the strengths of its members to produce far more than what one person working alone could do.
- Issues and concerns are shared openly, without attack.
- Team members trust one another.
- The success of the team is more important than individual agendas.
- Productivity and energy are high.

-- Tuckman, 1965



► Adjourning

	Characteristics	Issues
	<p>The team comes to “an end”</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A team member(s) leaves • The team dissolves 	<p>Resistance to ending</p> <p>Grieving over the loss of a team member</p> <p>Affirming the group’s achievements</p> <p>Closure</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Every team comes to an end – the end of a meeting, a team member leaving, or the team itself coming to an end. 		

-- Tuckman, 1965



► Final Thoughts about Stages of Team Development

- Every team goes through predictable stages
- It is important that teams not get “stuck” either in the Forming or Storming stages
- Losing a team member sends the team back to the Forming stage
- Adding a new team member (e.g., a new family) sends the team back to the Forming stage



► Final Thoughts about Stages of Team Development

- An effective team will take the time to help the new team member (family or professional)
 - Feel safe and secure
 - Understand the mission, roles, and rules of the team
 - Understand where he or she “fits” on the team and what is expected of him/her



Key Requirements for Building and Maintaining an EI Transdisciplinary Team



- Time devoted to team development
- Ground rules for working together
- Role clarification
- Effective communication
- Using evidence-based collaboration and teaming practices
- Regularly reflecting on the process of working together



► Ground Rules for Working Together

- The purpose of Team Ground Rules
 - To express team values
 - To make sure each team member knows what's expected
 - To help a new team member fit into the team
 - To build commitment and accountability



-- Harper & Harper, 1994



► Ground Rules for Working Together

- How often shall we hold team meetings?
 - How long should the meetings last? When should we meet? Where?
 - How should we build the agenda for the meeting?
 - Who will lead the meeting?
- What is the purpose of our team?
- How can we best accomplish our purpose?
- What are our expectations for the team? Our biggest worries? Our hopes? What past experiences do we bring to the team?

-- Harper & Harper, 1994



► Ground Rules for Working Together

- How will we make decisions?
- How do we make sure everyone speaks? How do we make sure everyone is listened to?
- How will we prioritize our work?
- How will we handle conflicts?
- What skills do members have and what do they want to learn?
- How can we constantly improve what we do?

-- Harper & Harper, 1994



► Ground Rules for Working Together

- How will we treat one another?
- How will mistakes be handled?
- How will we deal with others who fail to live up to their agreements?
- What will we do when some of us are under tight deadlines and pressure?
- How will we recognize good work?
- What promises will we make to one another?



Key Requirements for Building and Maintaining an EI Transdisciplinary Team



- Time devoted to team development
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► The #1 Myth about Roles in the Transdisciplinary Model



I'm a SUPERTHERAPIST!
Now I can do anything!



► The #2 Myth about Roles in the Transdisciplinary Model



I'm lost. I don't know who I am any longer.



► A Transdisciplinary Approach to EI

- Members of a transdisciplinary team cross professional discipline and agency boundaries to achieve service integration by consulting one another. They do not abandon their discipline, but blend specific skills with other team members to focus on achieving integrated outcomes (Pletcher & Younggren, 2013)



► How one physical therapist in Portugal described her role

- “I’m not teaching the family or other team members to become a physical therapist. I’m sharing my knowledge and skills with them to help this particular child.”



► Hallmarks of the Transdisciplinary Model

- Role Extension
- Role Enrichment
- Role Expansion
- Role Exchange
- Role Release
- Role Support



-- Briggs, 1993



► Hallmarks of the Transdisciplinary Model

- Role Extension

- Increasing one's own expertise
- Engaging in activities to improve one's own knowledge base and clinical skills
- Seeking depth of knowledge, which leads to increased self-confidence



-- Briggs, 1993



► Hallmarks of the Transdisciplinary Model

- Role Enrichment

- Beginning to explore theoretical information and basic principles from other members of the team
- Occurs during team meetings and after attending interdisciplinary conferences with other team members



-- Briggs, 1993



► Hallmarks of the Transdisciplinary Model

- Role Expansion
 - An intentional and thoughtful pooling of ideas from team members
 - Occurs when team members begin to make informed observations and recommendations outside their own discipline



-- Briggs, 1993



► Hallmarks of the Transdisciplinary Model

- Role Exchange

- Team members are now equipped with new knowledge and skills
- Team members begin to incorporate new skills from other disciplines/team members into their repertoire
- However, these skills are not used until they have been demonstrated and approved



-- Briggs, 1993



► Hallmarks of the Transdisciplinary Model

- Role Release

- Team members can now practice new skills independently, with ON-GOING CONTINUOUS CONSULTATION from other team members
- Team members continue to need access to other team members for theory building and refining their skills
- Role release \neq role replacement



-- Briggs, 1993



► Hallmarks of the Transdisciplinary Model

- Role Support

- The primary service provider may not always be able to represent all disciplines
- Some roles and responsibilities cannot be released
- Some interventions must be performed by specific disciplines/team members

-- Briggs, 1993



Key Requirements for Building and Maintaining an EI Transdisciplinary Team



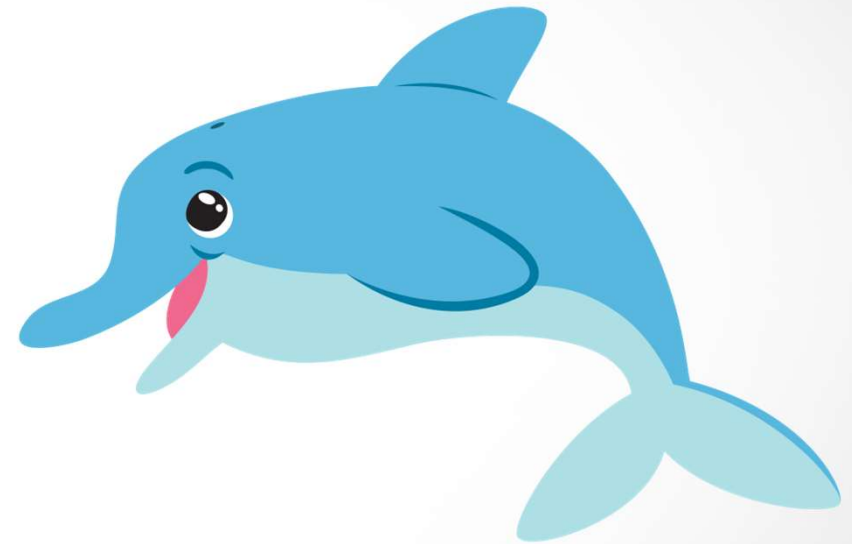
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► Communication Strategies



Killer Whale Strategies Hurt the Team



Dolphin Strategies Support the Team



► Killer Whale Communication Strategies

Strategy	Example
Judging or evaluating	“You should . . .” “You’re wrong”
Superiority – I’m better than you	“Oh, that’s nothing!” “I can top that!”
Certainty	“My mind is already made up” “That won’t work”
Advising (without being asked)	“I think it would be best if . . .”
Controlling or manipulating	“I wouldn’t do that if I were you”
Diagnosing	“The reason you feel this way’ “What you need to do is . . .”
Interrogating	“Why did you do THAT?”



-- Briggs, 1993



► Killer Whale Communication Strategies

Strategy	Example
Threatening	"You can't do that"
Lecturing and arguing	"Don't you know that . . .?" "Yes, but . . ."
Condescending praise	"You have so much potential"
Ridiculing	"What would you know?"
Diminishing others	"It's not so bad" "Don't worry – it will get better" "You shouldn't feel this way"
Stereotyping	"Parents are all alike" "All therapists . . ."



-- Briggs, 1993



► Killer Whale Communication Strategies

Strategy	Example
Using jargon	Acronyms, words and phrases that others are unlikely to understand
Withholding information (overtly)	“This is too technical for you”
Withholding information (covertly)	Assuming that parents aren’t “ready” for our information
Correcting instead of Paraphrasing	“Oh, that’s wrong – this is what you meant to say”
Nonverbal communication	Looking at your watch, checking your phone, rolling your eyes, failing to make eye contact



► Killer Whale Communication Strategies

- “Any communication that expresses nonacceptance of feelings, a desire to change another, a lack of trust, or a judgment that someone is wrong will create a block to effective interactions and ultimately interfere with the mission of the EI team.”



-- Briggs, 1993, p. 39



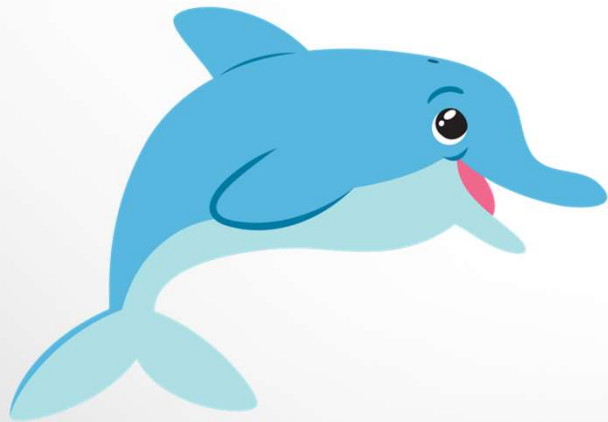
► What is the #1 communication skill of an effective team member?

Active Listening



► Active Listening is a Dolphin Communication Strategy

- When people are listened to . . .
 - They feel important
 - They feel worthwhile
 - They feel as though they have valuable ideas and resources to contribute
 - They feel empowered



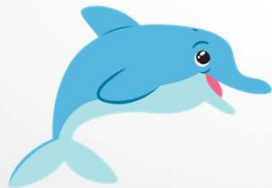
- When people feel listened to, they are more likely to
 - Offer suggestions
 - Offer ideas
 - Take risks
 - Speak openly
 - Participate
 - Discuss their honest feelings
 - Be creative

-- Harper & Harper, 1994



► Active Listening is More than a Skill

- Active listening is based on VALUES
 - I believe that listening to people is important and worth taking the time to do so.
 - I believe that other people are important and have something to contribute
 - I believe that feelings are as important as facts. I believe I need to listen “between the words.”
 - I believe that listening is powerful and empowering.
 - I believe that people are capable of solving their own problems.
 - I believe that empathy is important. I believe I need to listen in order to appreciate the other person’s point of view.
 - I believe that EVERYONE has something valuable to say.

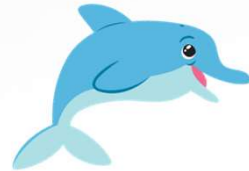


-- Harper & Harper, 1994



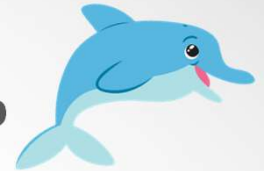
► Active Listening is ACTIVE, not Passive

As a Dolphin, I choose to



- Create an atmosphere for listening
- Give the other person my full attention
- Make eye contact
- Paraphrase to make sure I understood
- Listen for feelings as well as facts

As a Dolphin, I choose NOT to



- Interrupt or complete the other's sentences
- Assume that I know what the other person is going to say
- Mentally rehearse what I'm going to say next while the other person is still speaking
- Respond as a Killer Whale

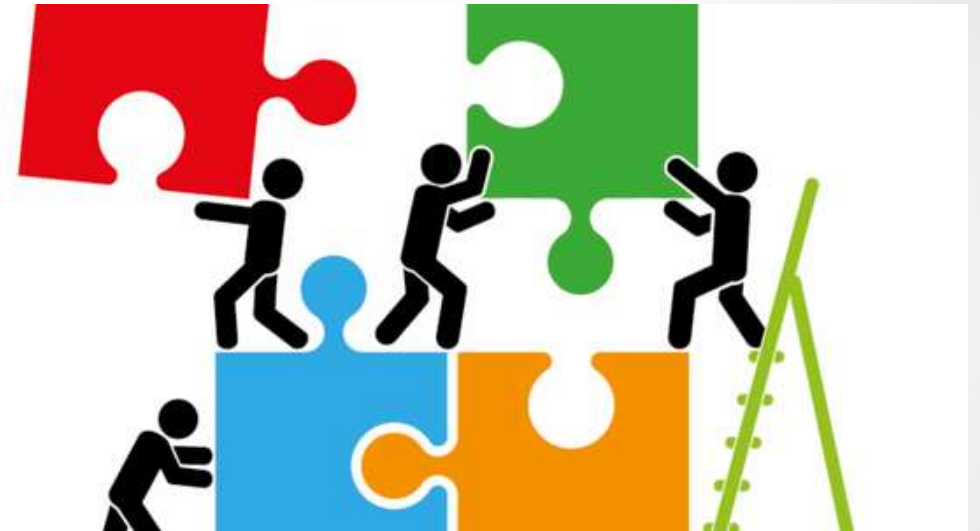
-- Harper & Harper, 1994



Key Requirements for Building and Maintaining an EI Transdisciplinary Team



- Time devoted to team development
- Ground rules for working together
- Role clarification
- Effective communication
- Using evidence-based collaboration and teaming practices
- Regularly reflecting on the process of working together





► DEC Recommended Practices: Teaming and Collaboration

TC1. Practitioners representing multiple disciplines and families work together as a team to plan and implement supports and services to meet the unique needs of each child and family.

TC2. Practitioners and families work together as a team to systematically and regularly exchange expertise, knowledge, and information to build team capacity and jointly solve problems, plan, and implement interventions.

TC3. Practitioners use communication and group facilitation strategies to enhance team functioning and interpersonal relationships with and among team members.

Division for Early Childhood. (2014). DEC recommended practices in early intervention/early childhood special education 2014. Retrieved from <http://www.dec-sped.org/recommendedpractices>





► DEC Recommended Practices: Teaming and Collaboration

TC4. Team members assist each other to discover and access community-based services and other informal and formal resources to meet family-identified child or family needs.

TC5. Practitioners and families may collaborate with each other to identify one practitioner from the team who serves as the primary liaison between the family and other team members based on child and family priorities and needs.

Division for Early Childhood. (2014). DEC recommended practices in early intervention/early childhood special education 2014. Retrieved from <http://www.dec-sped.org/recommendedpractices>



► Now let's spend time thinking together about these practices





► DEC Recommended Practices: Teaming and Collaboration

TC1. Practitioners representing multiple disciplines and families work together as a team to plan and implement supports and services to meet the unique needs of each child and family.

- How would you explain this practice to a family?
- If I were visiting your team, what would I see you doing?

Division for Early Childhood. (2014). DEC recommended practices in early intervention/early childhood special education 2014. Retrieved from <http://www.dec-sped.org/recommendedpractices>





► DEC Recommended Practices: Teaming and Collaboration

TC2. Practitioners and families work together as a team to systematically and regularly exchange expertise, knowledge, and information to build team capacity and jointly solve problems, plan, and implement interventions.

- How would you explain this practice to a family?
- If I were visiting your team, what would I see you doing?





► DEC Recommended Practices: Teaming and Collaboration

TC3. Practitioners use communication and group facilitation strategies to enhance team functioning and interpersonal relationships with and among team members.

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► DEC Recommended Practices: Teaming and Collaboration

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► DEC Recommended Practices: Teaming and Collaboration

TC5. Practitioners and families may collaborate with each other to identify one practitioner from the team who serves as the primary liaison between the family and other team members based on child and family priorities and needs.

- How would you explain this practice to a family?
- If I were visiting your team, what would I see you doing?

Division for Early Childhood. (2014). DEC recommended practices in early intervention/early childhood special education 2014. Retrieved from <http://www.dec-sped.org/recommendedpractices>



Key Requirements for Building and Maintaining an EI Transdisciplinary Team



- Time devoted to team development
- Ground rules for working together
- Role clarification
- Effective communication
- Using evidence-based collaboration and teaming practices
- Regularly reflecting on the process of working together



► Resources to help the team reflect together





► The DEC Recommended Practices Checklists: Teaming and Collaboration

1) Families Are Full Team Members Checklist

- The checklist indicators describe steps and actions teams can take to ensure the families are full team members. Teams should support each family in order to build trust and increase their involvement.

2) Communication for Teaming and Collaboration Checklist

- The checklist indicators are examples of communication skills for building team relationships.

3) Collaboration to Learn and Grow Checklist

- The checklist indicators describe steps and actions team members can take to share and gain expertise.

<http://ectacenter.org/decrp/topic-teaming.asp>



The DEC Recommended Practices Checklists:

Teaming and Collaboration



TEAMING AND COLLABORATION Checklist 1 of 3

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Families Are Full Team Members Checklist

This checklist includes steps and actions teams can take to ensure that families are included as full team members and are valued as experts who are considered vital to effective team functioning.

All team members, including family members, are involved and engaged in various ways and to varying degrees over time. Families need to be supported to increase their level of involvement as comfort and trust build and as the team grows and learns together.

The checklist indicators can be used by team members individually or together to determine whether true collaboration is taking place. The checklist rating scale can be used for a self-evaluation to determine whether the different practices were used during teaming activities.

Practitioner: _____ Child: _____ Date: _____

Please indicate which practice characteristics you were able to use during teaming activities:	Seldom or never (0 - 25%)	Some of the time (25 - 50%)	As often as I can (50 - 75%)	Most of the time (75 - 100%)	Notes
1. Inform families that they are the experts on their child and are important members of the team	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
2. Ask families if they prefer to be addressed as Mr./Mrs. or by first names and honor their preferences	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
3. Include families in identifying a practitioner from the team who will serve as the primary liaison between the family and other team members	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
4. Share all information that is available to practitioners with families in a complete and non-biased manner	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
5. Share information with the family that is jargon-free so that family members can understand and participate in conversations and decisions	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
6. Provide multiple opportunities for families to meet with other team members and discuss information openly	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
7. Schedule all meetings pertinent to the family and child at times and locations convenient for the family	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
8. Prepare families for each interaction and solicit their input and ideas prior to any formal meeting	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
9. Ask families how they want to contribute to and be involved in any team interaction, recognizing that this may change over time and with the purpose of each interaction	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
10. Establish a climate that allows ALL team members to feel comfortable, share ideas, ask questions, suggest activities, and solve problems together	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
11. Accept and support families' decisions in all ongoing interactions	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	

This checklist is based upon the following DEC Recommended Practices: Teaming and Collaboration 1, 2, 3, 5
The DEC Recommended Practices are available at <http://dec-sped.org/recommendedpractices>
Access this checklist and other products at <http://ectacenter.org/decrp>
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TEAMING AND COLLABORATION Checklist 2 of 3

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Communication for Teaming and Collaboration Checklist

This checklist includes examples of verbal and written communication skills for building team relationships needed to work together effectively and gather/convey vital information for providing services and supports for children and families.

The checklist indicators can be used by team members to assess whether quality communication is taking place during all formal and informal team interactions (e.g., during intake, assessment, team meetings, and ongoing intervention interactions) and to develop a plan for any improvements that may be needed.

Practitioner: _____ Date: _____

Please indicate which of the practice characteristics you were able to use during team interactions:	Seldom or never (0 - 25%)	Some of the time (25 - 50%)	As often as I can (50 - 75%)	Most of the time (75 - 100%)	Notes
1. Choose the medium most appropriate for the purpose of the communication (email, text, memo, document, one-to-one, group meeting, etc.)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
2. Create a climate that will encourage dialogue, discussion, and creative problem-solving for decision-making	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
3. Clearly state the purpose of the communication interaction (e.g., give information, raise awareness, discuss options, reach a decision)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
4. Use clear, concise, jargon-free language appropriate for all team members	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
5. Use a tone of voice that is polite, open, and professional	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
6. Engage in active reflective listening behaviors to ensure that verbal messages are understood by all parties (e.g., focus on speaker, open-ended questions, paraphrasing, clarifying statements)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
7. Establish how comments or questions can be raised and by whom/how they will be addressed	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
8. Summarize/reiterate follow-up actions and next steps for all participants	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	

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TEAMING AND COLLABORATION Checklist 3 of 3

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Collaboration to Learn and Grow Checklist

This checklist includes steps and actions team members can take to share and gain expertise in order to provide effective interventions that meet the unique needs of individual children and their families.

A team that uses adult learning methods/teaching strategies to share knowledge and skills has a much better chance of achieving this outcome than any one team member working alone.

The checklist indicators can be used by team members individually or together to determine if they are using a variety of opportunities, both formal and informal, to focus on growing and learning together.

Practitioner: _____ Date: _____

Please indicate which practice characteristics you were able to use as a member of a team:	Seldom or never (0 - 25%)	Some of the time (25 - 50%)	As often as I can (50 - 75%)	Most of the time (75 - 100%)	Notes
1. Willingly share/receive knowledge, skills, and expertise with/from other team members	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
2. Offer one another support, guidance, and helpful feedback that are honest, respectful, and supportive	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
3. Provide/participate in authentic learning experiences (e.g., practicing, taking risks, making mistakes, trying out new ideas without judgment)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
4. Use a variety of methods for presenting new information to one another (e.g., discussions, group problem solving activities, visuals, handouts, case studies)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
5. Use facilitation, consultation, mentoring, and coaching practices for working with one another	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
6. Participate fully in scheduled team activities by being prepared, arriving on time, and remaining engaged throughout the activities	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
7. Keep an open mind when considering new concepts/ideas and work together to understand (or explain the "why" and "application" (what's in it for me) behind new learning)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
8. Recognize and allow time needed to master new ideas with practice, reflection, and continued support from others	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
9. Participate in intraspecific/community/professional organization opportunities to increase knowledge and awareness of resources to meet family and child needs	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	

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<http://ectacenter.org/decrp/topic-teaming.asp>





► Families Are Full Team Members Checklist

1. Inform families that they are the experts on their child and are important members of the team
2. Ask families if they prefer to be addressed as Ms./Mr. or by first names and honor their preferences
3. Include families in identifying a practitioner from the team who will serve as the primary liaison between the family and other team members
4. Share all information that is available to practitioners with families in a complete and non-biased manner
5. Share information with the family that is jargon-free so that family members can understand and participate in conversations and decisions
6. Provide multiple opportunities for families to meet with other team members and discuss information openly
7. Schedule all meetings pertinent to the family and child at times and locations convenient for the family
8. Prepare families for each interaction and solicit their input and ideas prior to any formal meeting
9. Ask families how they want to contribute to and be involved in any team interaction, recognizing that this may change over time and with the purpose of each interaction
10. Establish a climate that allows ALL team members to feel comfortable, share ideas, ask questions, suggest activities, and solve problems together
11. Accept and support families' decisions in all ongoing interactions

<http://ectacenter.org/decrp/topic-teaming.asp>

► Communication for Teaming and Collaboration Checklist

1. Choose the medium most appropriate for the purpose of the communication (email, text, memo, document, one-to-one, group meeting, etc.)
2. Create a climate that will encourage dialogue, discussion, and creative problem-solving for decision-making
3. Clearly state the purpose of the communication interaction (e.g., give information, raise awareness, discuss options, reach a decision)
4. Use clear, concise, jargon-free language appropriate for all team members
5. Use a tone of voice that is polite, open, and professional
6. Engage in active reflective listening behaviors to ensure that verbal messages are understood by all parties (e.g., focus on speaker, open-ended questions, paraphrasing, clarifying statements)
7. Establish how comments or questions can be raised and by whom/how they will be addressed
8. Summarize/reiterate follow-up actions and next steps for all participants

<http://ectacenter.org/decrp/topic-teaming.asp>





► Collaboration to Learn and Grow Checklist

1. Willingly share/receive knowledge, skills, and expertise with/from other team members
2. Offer one another support, guidance, and helpful feedback that are honest, respectful, and supportive
3. Provide/participate in authentic learning experiences (e.g., practicing, taking risks, making mistakes, trying out new ideas without judgment)
4. Use a variety of methods for presenting new information to one another (e.g., discussions, group problem solving activities, visuals, handouts, case studies)
5. Use facilitation, consultation, mentoring, and coaching practices for working with one another
6. Participate fully in scheduled team activities by being prepared, arriving on time, and remaining engaged throughout the activities
7. Keep an open mind when considering new concepts/ideas and work together to understand (or explain) the “why” and “application” (what’s in it for me) behind new learnings
8. Recognize and allow time needed to master new ideas with practice, reflection, and continued support from others
9. Participate in interagency/community/professional organization opportunities to increase knowledge and awareness of resources to meet family and child needs

<http://ectacenter.org/decrp/topic-teaming.asp>





▶ Another resource: The SIFT (Skills Inventory for Teams)

- Designed to help team members discuss the overall functioning of their team and to help teams plan activities to address needs of the entire team.
- 12 items
- 1-5 Likert scale
- Whole Team Version + Individual Team Member Version

-- Garland, Frank, Buck, & Seklemian, 1992



► SIFT Team Version

-- Garland, Frank, Buck, & Seklemian, 1992



1. CLARITY OF PURPOSE (Team mission, philosophy, and goals)				
1	2	3	4	5
We have no clearly defined philosophy or goals to which our team is committed.			Our philosophy and goals are written and clearly understood by members.	
Comments:				
2. COHESION (Team member's identify and sense of belonging to the team; level of cohesion).				
1	2	3	4	5
Our team has no sense of group loyalty or belonging; members are uninvolved or even hostile.			Our team members feel a strong sense of loyalty and identity.	
Comments:				





SIFT Team Version

-- Garland, Frank, Buck, & Seklemian, 1992



3. CLARITY OF ROLES (Member's understanding of leadership and membership roles on the team).				
1	2	3	4	5
Our roles on the team are unclear, and/or members are not committed to roles as defined by the team.			Each team member's role is clearly defined and understood by all; each member is highly committed to his/her role.	
Comments:				
4. COMMUNICATION (Openness and clarity of communication among team members).				
1	2	3	4	5
Members are reluctant to speak honestly or critically.			We have open and honest communication; members express ideas, thoughts, or feelings without fear of reprisal.	
Comments:				



► SIFT Team Version

-- Garland, Frank, Buck, & Seklemian, 1992



5. USE OF RESOURCES (Team's use of member knowledge, skills, and experiences).				
1	2	3	4	5
Resources are not identified by the team; team members' skills/expertise are not used to accomplish the team's work.			Resources of all members are recognized and used; team members contribute fully to the team.	
Comments:				
6. DECISION MAKING/PROBLEM SOLVING (Processes of decision making and problem solving used by the team).				
1	2	3	4	5
We have no effective, efficient process for decision making and problem solving that involves all team members.			We have a timely, effective, and efficient process involving all team members.	
Comments:				



► SIFT Team Version

-- Garland, Frank, Buck, & Seklemian, 1992

7. RESPONSIBILITY/IMPLEMENTATION (Responsibility for accomplishing the work of the team; team's progress toward achieving goals).				
1	2	3	4	5
No one assumes responsibility, and our work does not get done.			Members take responsibility for the work of the team, and we make steady progress toward team goals.	
Comments:				
8. CONFLICT RESOLUTION (Team's ability to recognize and manage conflict).				
1	2	3	4	5
Conflict or differences are denied, ignored, or are not worked through.			Conflict or differences are openly aired and worked through.	
Comments:				





SIFT Team Version

-- Garland, Frank, Buck, & Seklemian, 1992



9. VIEW OF FAMILY ROLE (Attitudes, acceptance, and actions of the team related to the family's role on the team).				
1	2	3	4	5
Families are viewed as clients, not as decision makers on our team.			Our policies and procedures support the family's role as team members and decision makers.	
Comments:				
10. EVALUATION (Continuing assessment and planning to improve team function).				
1	2	3	4	5
Our team does not regularly assess overall team performance.			We regularly evaluate how our team works and set goals in areas of need.	
Comments:				



► SIFT Team Version

-- Garland, Frank, Buck, & Seklemian, 1992



11. EXTERNAL SUPPORT (Administrative or community interaction or support for the team).				
1	2	3	4	5
Our team is not known in our agency or in the community, and/or our work is not respected.			Our team is involved in the community and respected for the services we provide.	
Comments:				
12. INTERNAL SUPPORT (Administrative procedures that authorize and support the work of the team).				
1	2	3	4	5
We do not have administrative support to work as a team.			We have time, resources, and authority to work together as a team.	
Comments:				



► 5.5 Summarizing and Next Steps



► What if I . . .



<https://youtu.be/ue3hCVHtZZY>



► In Summary . . .

- Using a transdisciplinary model can lead to more family-centered, integrated, and coordinated services (Carpenter, 2005)
- The transdisciplinary model reflects a best practice in early intervention (Guralnick, 2011)
- The transdisciplinary model can reduce confusion and fragmentation for families and professionals (Carpenter, 2005)



► In Summary . . .

- The transdisciplinary model promotes communication, interaction, and collaboration through sharing of roles across disciplinary boundaries and team members (Davies, 2007)
- The heart of the model? The commitment of the team members to teach, learn and work together (Peterson, 1987)
- The transdisciplinary model requires intensive, ongoing interaction and communication among all team members (King et al., 2009)



► In Summary . . .

- The family is an equal and active member of the transdisciplinary team
- The family is the primary decision-maker in all team decisions impacting the child and family



Examples of Resources to Help Families Be Active Team Members: DEC Recommended Practices Family Practice Guides



DEC Recommended Practices Topic Area: TEAMING & COLLABORATION

Family Practice Guide: 1.1

Participating on Your Child's Team

Early childhood staff that work with your family work as a team. YOU are an important member of this team. You are the most knowledgeable person about your child, your family, and what you want to see happen to help your child learn and grow. As a team member, it is important to share information about your child during your child's evaluation and assessment and to identify what you want to work on with your child. Helping to develop your child's intervention plan—Individualized Family Service Plan (IFSP) or Individualized Education Plan (IEP)—is also important. Your interactions with other team members provide opportunities to try out ideas, make suggestions, and provide feedback about what is or is not working. This practice guide includes different things that can help you be involved actively and meaningfully with other team members.

Watch a video of this Learning Guide

Learning Guide: Families Becoming Active Team Members

- At first, you might not know the other members of your child/family early intervention team, and it might feel awkward to participate in meetings. It takes time to build trusting relationships, and, over time, everyone on the team will become more comfortable with one another.
- Always feel free to ask team members about their roles, professional training, and what they like about working with young children. Besides getting to know them better, you'll learn how team members may be most helpful to you and your child.
- Avoid information overload! You will be getting lots of verbal and written information. Feel free to ask other team members about words or terms you may not understand. This is a new journey for your family.
- It is important that you understand your child and family's Individualized Family Service Plan (IFSP) or Individualized Education Program (IEP) and other documents and information you receive from the team.

A Quick Peek

Karen, an early intervention provider, arrives at a home visit and begins to address the IFSP goal on assisting two-year-old Amelia to use single words. Marcy, her mom, says it's nice to have a "conversation" with Amelia, but she just wishes Amelia wouldn't shriek at mealtime and would eat more varied foods. Marcy tells Karen the screaming at mealtime is a serious problem, and she's worrying whether Amelia is even getting enough food as she only wants pureed baby food. Together they talk about what may be happening. Marcy says it's close to lunch time and asks Karen to stay and observe her trying to feed Amelia. After several minutes, Karen suggests they ask the team's speech and occupational therapists to come assess Amelia to see if there are any physical reasons for her strong reaction to some foods. And they could also advise Marcy how she might help Amelia try new foods. Marcy says that is a good idea. Karen thanks Marcy for speaking up about these new concerns saying this is why Marcy is the most important member of Amelia's team!



You'll know the practice is working if ...

- You feel your questions and concerns are answered to your satisfaction.
- You are comfortable making suggestions and providing your input.
- You feel supported in the decisions you make.

For more information and activities about participating fully on your child and family early intervention team:
[Parent Participation in Early Intervention](http://www.ectacenter.org/decrp)

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<http://www.ectacenter.org/decrp/>

DEC Recommended Practices Topic Area: TEAMING & COLLABORATION

Family Practice Guide 2.1

Family Members Working with Other Team Members

As a member of your child's team, you and the other members will have many opportunities to communicate. Sometimes this might be in writing using emails, text messages, or written reports. Other times, this will happen face-to-face during a home visit or during an IFSP/IEP annual review. When you communicate with another team member, you want to be sure your message is understood. You want to express what you mean as clearly as possible. This helps team members understand one another and move forward together. This practice guide includes suggestions and ideas for effective face-to-face verbal communication.

Watch a video of this Learning Guide

Learning Guide: Developing and Using Quality Communication Skills

- When sitting down to talk to any of your child's team members, it often helps to find a place that is comfortable for all of you. At home this might be at the kitchen table. In a classroom it might be comfortable to sit in adult-size chairs around or on the same side of a table or desk. Feeling relaxed will encourage the give and take of a conversation.
- Allow enough time for each of you to talk and really listen to one another. It is best not to just "grab" a person on their way in or out of the classroom. Ask to schedule a time to talk that is convenient for you both.
- When possible, take the time to think about what you want to say before talking with another team member. You don't have to rehearse what you want to say, but think about using words that are clear and will be understood by other team members. Even if you are feeling uncomfortable, take a deep breath and focus on the points you want to make, as objectively as possible.
- It helps to start a conversation by explaining the purpose of what you want to talk about. It will also help if you are clear about what you hope will happen as a result of the discussion. This sets the stage for everyone to be on the same page about what you want the conversation to accomplish.
- Conversations and discussions are about taking turns between listening and talking. One person talks while the other listens. Asking questions or making a statement to clarify what the listener thinks the speaker is saying helps to make sure you are headed in the same direction. Summarizing any actions that will be taken ensures good follow-through.

A Quick Peek

Sandra found a note in Lenny's backpack that his preschool teacher wanted to meet with her about Lenny's hitting other children. Remembering some of the ideas she learned in a parent-teacher workshop about communication, Sandra drove to the meeting focusing on Lenny rather than who might be at fault. As she arrived, Mr. Smith greeted her warmly and thanked her for coming. He gestured to two chairs away from his desk and suggested they sit there. Sandra noticed he turned off his cell phone and left it on his desk. Mr. Smith began the conversation by telling her how much he enjoyed Lenny's humor and energy and then shared some of the day's work that Lenny had completed. She looked at Lenny's work and was glad the conversation had begun pleasantly. Then in a voice she hoped sounded polite, she said she wanted to know what had been happening in the class prior to the "hitting" instances. She said it was unusual for Lenny to hit and she wanted to figure out what might have caused him to behave that way. Mr. Smith said he agreed with her and he shared his observations of events leading up to the behavior. Sandra focused on listening to him, and he listened to her views and ideas. Together they shared information about both home and the classroom and came up with several ideas that they each could use.



You'll know the practice is working if ...

- Both you and the other team members feel "heard" and understood
- Conversations are calm and focused on solutions
- Both you and the other team member know the next steps you will take

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For more information and activities about positive and successful communication with your child's team, ask experienced parents or your early interventionist. You can find helpful resources online including [The Importance of Good Communication Skills](http://www.ectacenter.org/decrp/).

<http://www.ectacenter.org/decrp/>

DEC Recommended Practices Topic Area: TEAMING & COLLABORATION

Family Practice Guide 3.1

Sharing What You Know with Professionals

Working with practitioners provides you with many opportunities to share information and ideas about your child's likes, interests, and challenges. You know your child best, and can describe the many things you have done to help your child learn and grow. You can explain what you would like help with now. You also have knowledge and life experiences that other team members will likely not have. You have much to contribute to help other team members learn about your child and family. This practice guide includes ideas and strategies that will help you share information with team members.

Watch a video of this Learning Guide

Learning Guide: Sharing Information with Other Team Members

- Sharing information about your child's likes, dislikes, and interests will help other team members learn about your child and what might work best to support his learning. It will help them adjust ideas and activities to better fit your child. Sharing information can happen during every meeting and not just during the assessment process.
- Share information about what happens with your child on a typical day, the kinds of activities your family likes to do, and things you would like your child to be able to do. This information, along with information about your lifestyle and culture, can help team members develop interventions that can become part of your child's and family's daily routines and activities.
- Trying out ideas and activities team members have suggested based on your input helps other members learn about the kinds of support that will be most helpful to you and your child. When you and another team member are face-to-face or trying out a new idea, you will be able to see if that particular strategy works for you and your child.
- Being open to trying new ideas that other team members suggest will give you the opportunity to provide feedback about what ideas work best for you.



A Quick Peek

On a home visit, the teacher and physical therapist (PT) are with Celina and her 20-month-old outside in the front yard. Celina is seven months pregnant and having a difficult time carrying Alejandro up the steps to their front door. They have been working for several months on independent walking in the house and in the yard which Alejandro is now doing well. The PT and teacher make several suggestions that they try with Celina on the first five steps. Patting her expanding belly, Celina reminds them that she cannot bend over to assist him as they can. They next try to see if he can steady himself by holding onto the railing, but it's too far over his head. Celina's dad has carpentry skills, so she asks the team members to help her figure out how high the railing should be and what it should look like. Then she calls her dad who lives only a few blocks away. When he comes over, the PT explains what the team thinks will help, and Alejandro's grandpa says he can have it done easily in a few days. A follow-up visit is scheduled for Monday so they can help Alejandro use the new railing together.

You'll know the practice is working if ...

- You have opportunities to provide information about your child and family during ALL interactions with other team members.
- Activities and interventions are customized to fit your child and family's life and preferences.
- You learn useful things from other team members and feel that they also learn from you.

Find more information and activities online about your role as part of your child's early intervention team: [Parent-Professional Partnerships in Early Intervention](http://www.ectacenter.org/decrp/)

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<http://www.ectacenter.org/decrp/>

-- <http://ectacenter.org/decrp/topic-teaming.asp>

► The Final Step: Putting It into Practice

- Think about all the information we've talked about
- Think about all the discussions we've had today
- Think about our work together in EI
- Think about next week:
 - What are three teaming habits that you want to start practicing? (Uphill Habits)
 - What are three teaming habits that you need to work on weakening? (Downhill Habits)



► Think about Next Week

UPHILL HABITS



Habits that will take effort to learn and maintain

-
-
-

DOWNHILL HABITS



Habits that will require work to weaken (or “break”)

-
-
-



