



## What you will learn about Communication for Collaboration and Family-Professional Partnerships with families of children with diverse abilities

*QRIS Indicator for Step 5 Children with Diverse Abilities: Child Inclusion Plans are completed with families for children with diverse abilities in each classroom annually.*

### **ESSENTIAL KNOWLEDGE: EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION WILL ESTABLISH TRUST, GAIN AN UNDERSTANDING OF PRIORITIES AND NEEDS, AND REACH AGREEMENT ON HOW TO BEST WORK TOGETHER**

Build strong relationships with and among families, teachers, caregivers, and community programs. (Early Learning eGuidelines, Essential Practices, Family Support)

National Association for the Education of Young Children Program Standard 7: Families. The program establishes and maintains collaborative relationships with each child's family to foster children's development in all settings. These relationships are sensitive to family composition, language, and culture. To support children's optimal learning and development, programs need to establish relationships with families based on mutual trust and respect, involve families in their children's educational growth, and encourage families to fully participate in the program.

National Association for the Education of Young Children Program Standard 8: Community Relationships. The program establishes relationships with and uses the resources of the children's communities to support the achievement of program goals. Relationships with agencies and institutions in the community can help a program achieve its goals and connect families with resources that support children's healthy development and learning.

CEC/DEC Standard 10: Collaboration, Models and strategies of consultation and collaboration (CC10 K1)

### **What does this look like in practice?**

- Family members share information with professionals about modifications that can be made for their child to be successful in different environments.
- Professionals use communication journals to share information with families and, in turn, families share information about how the child is doing at home.

***ESSENTIAL KNOWLEDGE: GATHERING INFORMATION TO IDENTIFY COMMON CONCERNS AND PERSPECTIVES CAN BE DONE IN DAY-TO-DAY CONVERSATIONS, OR DURING FORMAL MEETINGS***

Team members support an optimum climate for all caregiving adults to ensure trust, collaboration, and open communication (DEC Recommended Practice, I4)

**What does this look like in practice?**

- Professionals and families meet at times and places that are convenient for everyone.
- Professionals and families get to know each other at times other than during crises or during required meetings.
- Professionals use e-mail to communicate with other professionals and families.
- Time is scheduled for professionals and families to work and exchange ideas together.

***ESSENTIAL KNOWLEDGE: SUPPORTIVENESS, RESPONSIVENESS AND A GENUINE DESIRE TO WORK TOGETHER ENCOURAGE ACHIEVEMENT OF MUTUAL GOALS***

Team members make time for and use collaborative skills when consulting and communicating with other team members, including families and regular teachers and caregivers (DEC Recommended Practices, I5)

**What does this look like in practice?**

- Professionals acknowledge gaps in communication and make plans to remedy the problem.
- Child care providers, specialists and families work together to assess needs, develop and teach strategies and evaluate effectiveness.

***ESSENTIAL KNOWLEDGE: FAMILY COMMUNICATION STYLE, CULTURE AND PREFERENCES ARE CONSIDERED WHEN DEVELOPING PARTNERSHIPS***

Family/professional relationship building is accomplished in ways that are responsive to cultural, language, and other family characteristics (DEC Recommended Practices, F5).

Practices, supports, and resources are responsive to the cultural, ethnic, racial, language, and socioeconomic characteristics and preferences of families and their communities (DEC Recommended Practice, F13).

**What does this look like in practice?**

- Professionals identify and use interpreters as necessary to ensure that families have full information about available resources.
- Professionals use some words or phrases in the family's preferred language.
- Family members are invited to all activities, meetings and special events.

### ***ESSENTIAL KNOWLEDGE: DECISION MAKING IS SHARED WITH FAMILIES***

Family members and professionals jointly develop appropriate family-identified outcomes (DEC Recommended Practices, F1).

Practices, supports, and resources provide families with participatory experiences and opportunities promoting choice and decision making (DEC Recommended Practices, F6).

#### **What does this look like in practice?**

- Goals are developed with the family.
- Information is shared prior to meeting so that everyone has time to reflect and develop clarifying questions.
- Professional's help families learn about resources and supports that address their particular parenting needs and how to access these resources.

### ***ESSENTIAL KNOWLEDGE: FAMILY IS A CONSTANT IN CHILDREN'S LIVES AND SERVICE SYSTEMS AND PERSONNEL MUST SUPPORT, RESPECT, ENCOURAGE, AND ENHANCE THE STRENGTH AND COMPETENCE OF THE FAMILY***

Supports and resources provide families with information, competency-enhancing experiences, and participatory opportunities to strengthen family functioning and promote parenting knowledge and skills (DEC Recommended Practices, F9).

Family member and professionals work together and share information routinely and collaboratively to achieve family-identified outcomes (DEC Recommended Practices, F2).

#### **What does this look like in practice?**

- Family members and professionals speak on a regular basis
- Professionals videotape children in center-based programs for parents to view if they cannot attend sessions
- Professionals use communication journals to share information and gain information from families