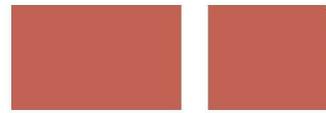


Family Information Gathering

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The following *Review Guidelines* are intended to help service providers and individuals involved in personnel preparation determine the congruence between the beliefs, values, and practices of the individuals in your community and current recommended practices in early childhood/special education. The *Review Guidelines* will first help you consider the overall effectiveness of presentation of a material. Next, questions follow which pertain specifically to the content area of **Family Information Gathering**.

It is important to realize that no material is likely to match the exact needs of individuals in your community. Therefore, in many instances, you may wish to make some simple adaptations to the materials before using them.

A separate set of *Review Guidelines* is available to help select materials that have been translated from one language to another. In addition, other suggestions for choosing materials are available on the CLAS Web site (<http://clas.uiuc.edu>). It is our hope that you may use these *Review Guidelines* to engage in meaningful dialogue with families and colleagues in your community, as you decide which materials to use in your early childhood setting.

Effectiveness of Presentation

Please respond to all that apply.

CLARITY

- (a) Is the purpose of the material clear?
- (b) Is the presentation of the information easy to follow?
- (c) If there are directions on how to use the material, are they clearly stated?
- (d) Does the material include an effective explanation of technical terms or jargon?

- (e) Does the language in the material acknowledge diversity (e.g., family structures, multi-generations, disabilities, gender, ethnicity, socio-economic status, religion, etc.)?
- (f) Is the format (e.g., print, audio, video, etc.) appropriate for the intended users of this material?
- (g) Are contact agencies or persons for accessing additional information or support easily identifiable?

COMPREHENSION LEVEL

Easy = mainly simple sentences with minimal or no technical jargon;

Average = a mix of simple and complex sentences with some technical jargon (e.g., USA Today);

Difficult = mainly complex sentences with a lot of technical jargon or discipline-specific terms (e.g., College-level text or New York Times).

- (a) For printed materials, the reading level of the material is:
Easy | Average | Difficult | N/A
- (b) For video and audio materials, the comprehension level of the material is:
Easy | Average | Difficult | N/A

GRAPHICS, ILLUSTRATIONS AND PHOTOS

Do the graphics ...

- (a) Represent a non-stereotypical view of cultural (e.g., contemporary dress) and linguistic groups?
- (b) Represent a wide variety of groups (e.g., disabilities, gender, race, generation)?
- (c) Enhance the materials (e.g., photo prints and designs are appropriate and of high quality)?

1.

ESTABLISHING A HEALTHY RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN PROVIDERS AND FAMILIES

To what extent does the material ...

- (a) Emphasize the importance of providers and families establishing a comfortable relationship prior to gathering information (*e.g., understanding values and beliefs*)?
- (b) Provide strategies for developing a collaborative and supportive relationship between service providers and family members?
- (c) Acknowledge the importance of employing service providers who respect and are knowledgeable about the cultures and languages of the families served?
- (d) Encourage the provision of services in the families' preferred language or through the assistance of a qualified translator/interpreter who can serve as a cultural mediator?
- (e) Encourage providers to engage in self-reflection regarding their role, assumptions, and beliefs and how they may be perceived by the family (*e.g., supportive, interfering, guiding, intrusive*)?
- (f) Encourage service providers to clarify their role with families and to gather information regarding family expectations?
- (g) Offer strategies to address conflict or misunderstanding that may arise between the family information gathering process and families' preferences?
- (h) Acknowledge the importance of developing a climate of mutual respect and trust by responding to family concerns as they arise?
- (i) Acknowledge that families have a range of beliefs and practices that influence their attitudes toward services and family information gathering efforts?
- (j) Emphasize the need to understand the important role that communication styles (*e.g., eye contact, slang/colloquial expressions, and body language*) may play in family information gathering?

TOOLS, INSTRUMENTS, AND PROCEDURES

2.

To what extent does the material ...

- (a) Acknowledge that family information gathering is a voluntary activity for families?
- (b) Acknowledge that family members may differ in their availability or desire to participate in the family information gathering process, which may increase or decrease over time?
- (c) Acknowledge that some families may view the use of family information gathering tools as an invasion of privacy or as threatening or demeaning?
- (d) Advocate family information gathering procedures that are non-intrusive, non-judgmental, and conducted with sensitivity?
- (e) Provide a variety of strategies (*e.g., interviews, observations, tools, and instruments*) to gather information about families' resources, priorities, and concerns?
- (f) Acknowledge that the family information gathering process should be ongoing, over time, interactive, and adaptable to the family's changing needs, priorities, and concerns?
- (g) Suggest that providers should select initial information gathering strategies that are comfortable for families (*e.g., open-ended strategies and techniques for new families*)?
- (h) Encourage service providers to consider the reading and comprehension abilities of family members when selecting family information gathering tools?
- (i) Address biases that may exist in family information gathering instruments (*e.g., they have been used primarily with middle to higher SES groups*)?
- (j) Acknowledge that family information gathering should help providers understand and better appreciate the complex ecology of families (*e.g., culture, neighborhoods, friends, extended family, and organizations*)?
- (k) Encourage providers to identify and use supports that already exist in each family's environment (*e.g., neighborhoods, friends, extended family, and organizations*)?

3.

USING INFORMATION GATHERED FROM FAMILIES

To what extent does the material ...

- (a) Indicate that the information obtained from the family should assist in finding resources for the family and/or developing programs for the child/family?
- (b) Provide strategies for establishing family goals related to their child's development and family function?
- (c) Acknowledge the need to identify the supports and services necessary to enhance the family's capacity to meet the changing developmental needs of their child?
- (d) Acknowledge that the family information gathering process should address the changing needs and preferences of the child and family over time?
- (e) Advocate that bicultural/bilingual individuals (*e.g., parent liaisons, community members, etc.*) are available to assist in interpreting the findings within the context of the family's community?

4.

EVALUATING IMPACT AND APPROPRIATENESS OF THE FAMILY INFORMATION GATHERING TOOLS, INSTRUMENTS, AND PROCEDURES

To what extent does the material ...

- (a) Encourage providers to systematically evaluate the appropriateness of the family information gathering tools, instruments, and procedures with families based on their changing needs and preferences?
- (b) Suggest ways of ensuring that outcomes are important and meaningful to the families as well as the service providers?
- (c) Include a variety of options for gathering information from families (*e.g., interviews, observations, checklists, etc.*) that respect families' cultural and linguistic background and consider families' level of acculturation?
- (d) Specify the cultural and linguistic groups with whom the family information gathering tool or instrument has been used?

The following two questions are intended to deepen the analysis of the ways materials address issues of diversity. In some cases, these issues may have been addressed in the preceding questions.

5.

Does the material acknowledge and address complex and sometimes subtle aspects of diversity as they relate to family information gathering, such as:

- (a) Power (refers to the division of members of society into levels with unequal access to resources, knowledge, and authority)
- (b) Racism (refers to systems advantage based on race)
- (c) Prejudice (refers to an adverse judgment or opinion based on preconceived beliefs and ideas about different groups)
- (d) Socio-Economic Class (refers to the division of society into levels with unequal wealth and prestige)

6.

Are there any spoken or unspoken assumptions, values, or beliefs in this material that could conflict with the delivery of culturally and linguistically appropriate services (e.g., assuming all parents view themselves as advocates or equal partners)?