

## Partnering with Your Child's Assessment Team Members

The purpose of a child assessment is to gather information for identifying a child's strengths and challenges in everyday activities, making decisions about a child's eligibility for intervention services, developing intervention plans, or monitoring child progress. Parents are members of the assessment team and play an important role in identifying the assessment process by providing insights throughout the assessment about a child's strengths, abilities, interests, and challenges.

Watch a video of this Learning Guide

### Learning Guide: Sharing My Knowledge, Priorities, and Concerns

- Before your child's assessment, ask questions to learn about the assessment process. What will team members be doing? How long will it take? What kinds of information will be gathered and how? Why is this information needed? What types of assessment tools will be used? How can I be involved in my child's assessment?
- Suggest that the assessment take place during a time you think would be optimal for your child. This could be a time when your child might be especially alert, when a particular activity is occurring, or when your child might be involved in different activities and routines that could be observed.
- Share information with other team members about the different kinds of activities your child and your family do throughout your day at home and in the community. Describe how your child participates in different activities, including things your child does easily and things your child has difficulty doing. Describe your child's favorite activities and the toys, materials, people, and actions that hold your child's interest.
- Together with other team members, observe your child participating in different activities and routines. Take note of what your child does well and what is difficult for your child. Share your concerns about your child's participation in the activities.
- Identify other ways to share information about your child with the team members. For example, share photos or videos of your child participating in activities.
- Work together with other team members to complete a developmental checklist by describing what your child does or attempts to do for the different checklist items.
- If other professionals such as doctors or therapists have assessed your child, provide the assessment team with copies of the reports or permission to obtain the reports. Reviewing medical information and reports of previous screenings or assessments can be helpful as part of the evaluation and assessment process.
- When the evaluation team meets to discuss the assessment results, you might want to take notes of what is discussed and what conclusions were made. Ask for explanations if there is something you do not understand. Provide feedback about the accuracy of the assessment findings. Discuss your priorities for planning next steps for your child's intervention plan.



#### A Quick Peek

Sonya has been jotting down questions to ask the evaluation team before the assessment of her 38-month-old son, Charles. She has been using her smart phone to take short videos of Charles in different activities. Sonya hopes that the videos will show the team members the behavior that are of concern and the skills he does well. Sonya called Charles' childcare provider and asked her to write down her observations of Charles. Sonya knows that the evaluation team will be coming to her home to do the assessment. She asked that they do the assessment on a day that he is not in childcare and in the morning because Charles is the most alert and happy at that time of the day. When she speaks to the service coordinator, Sonya is told about what will happen on the day of the assessment, when and how she can share the information and questions she has, and what role she will have in the assessment process.

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

- You understand how you can be involved in your child's assessment process
- Your observations are taken into consideration by the team members
- Intervention plans are developed that reflect your priorities for your child

Among the helpful activities and resources available online is "[How to Communicate Effectively with Early Childhood Professionals](#)" from the PACER Center.