



Activity 5.1 Family – Voices from the Field

Questions and Considerations

1. According to Ann Turnbull, what are two steps that a practitioner could take to engage in empathetic communication?
2. Gabriella Reyes talked about choosing between a special education preschool classroom and a fully inclusive classroom for her son. How can practitioners help families weigh their options between the two types of settings to inform what setting might be best to meet their child's needs?
3. According to Kate Boone, what are some ways that practitioners can include and support siblings of children with disabilities?
4. Chaw Chaw talked about her work with families who are refugees. What are some of her suggestions about how to build trust and partnership with families who are refugees?

Possible Responses

1. You may have mentioned any two of the following:
 - a. Listen with their hearts as well as their ears and eyes
 - b. Step into the shoes of the families to try to understand what they are going through
 - c. Be explicit about the feelings by noticing, naming, responding and validating
 - d. Demonstrating that they understand and care
2. You may have mentioned that practitioners should find ways to help families access information about the optional classroom settings in a way they can understand and use to make an informed decision. Practitioners can also work together with families to create outcomes and goals together based on families' concerns, priorities and expertise on their children's strengths and needs.
3. You may have mentioned supporting siblings in gaining a better understanding about their siblings' disabilities, and helping siblings develop new skills and build competence that can promote family functioning, e.g., in Kate's case, she wished she had been supported to learn sign language.
4. You may have mentioned the importance of being patient and taking time to learn about the family's culture and beliefs by participating in family or community events; building trust by working alongside the family, and/or with their community leader; reassure the family that they are not alone and connect them with the resources that are available.