



Evidence-Based Practice Tip Sheet Series

COACHING PRACTICES

Watch Now!



WHAT IS COACHING?

“An evidence-based adult learning strategy that is used to build the capacity of a parent or colleague to improve existing abilities, develop new skills, and gain a deeper understanding of his or her practices for use in current and future situations” (FIPP, 2020).



WHAT SHOULD I KNOW ABOUT COACHING PRACTICES IN PART C EARLY INTERVENTION?

Essential components of coaching include **observation** (including child, parent, and interventionist), **demonstration with explanation, practice, reflection, feedback**, and intentional partnering and planning - or **joint planning** (EI/EC PD CoP, 2023).

Coaching aligns with key early intervention principles including: “The primary role of a service provider in early intervention is to work with and support family members and caregivers in children's lives” (ECTA, 2008).

Coaching aligns with the Division of Early Childhood (DEC) Recommended Practices including: “Practitioners engage the family in opportunities that support and strengthen parenting knowledge and skills and parenting competence and confidence in ways that are flexible, individualized, and tailored to the family's preferences” (DEC, 2014).

National organizations representing the major disciplines providing services in Part C early intervention have supported coaching as an effective strategy for increasing outcomes for infants and toddlers (Adams, Tapia, et al, 2013; AOTA, 2017; APTA, 2013; Brown, 2016).



WHAT DOES THE LAW SAY ABOUT COACHING PRACTICES?

Although the the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) does not address specific coaching practices, it does promote use of **evidence based practices**. IDEA 34 CFR 303.1 states that: “A statewide system described in section 1433 of this title shall include, at a minimum, the following components: . . . (a) (2) A State policy that is in effect and that ensures that appropriate early intervention services based on scientifically based research, to the extent practicable, are available to all infants and toddlers with disabilities and their families . . .” Additionally, Wisconsin Administrative Code - Dept. of Health Services, Chapter 90.11.(2).(a).(1). outlines the general conditions and general role of providers of early intervention services.

Wisconsin Birth to 3 Program Operations Guide
see Chapter 10: Early Intervention Services



WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS OF USING COACHING PRACTICES IN PART C EARLY INTERVENTION?

- ✓ Coaching can be used to support caregivers as well as other EI team members in a primary provider approach because the evidence-based characteristics of have been found to be compatible with the adult decision-making process (Haliburton, 2021).
- ✓ Coaching allows caregivers in a child's life to recognize what they are already doing to support child learning and development as well as building upon existing or new ideas (Rush and Shelden, 2020).
- ✓ The use of the characteristics of a coaching interaction style as part of early intervention services has been shown to increase caregiver capacity to provide for their family's health and wellbeing and support child learning (Dunst et al., 2014).

WHAT ARE CONSIDERATIONS FOR COACHING IN PART C EARLY INTERVENTION?



During Coaching Visits: How does the team ensure that there is opportunity for:

- the coach and caregiver to actively observe targeted skill(s) or practice(s) with the purpose of developing new strategies or ideas? **(Observation)**
- the coach to provide guidance and modeling, if/when needed, during activities to effectively support the caregiver's use of strategies? **(Action/Practice)**
- the coach and caregiver to consider existing knowledge/skills and usefulness of new strategies through the use of reflective questions? **(Reflection)**
- the coach to provide helpful feedback to support the caregiver in analyzing their use of strategies and the impact on future activities? **(Feedback)**
- the coach and caregiver to review routines and strategies at the beginning and end of visits to help plan activities that will happen during and between visits? **(Joint Plan)**

Documentation: How does the documentation of the coaching conversation help the coach and caregiver to understand what happened during the activity and identify a plan for the next visit and the time in-between visits?

Multiple Caregivers/Settings: How are coaching conversations shared with caregivers who are not present during a coaching visit? How does the team apply coaching practices in the different settings where the child and caregiver interact (i.e. home, child care, community)?

Please see reference page for sources utilized within the evidence-based practice tip sheet series.

