



Family Engagement in Early Care and Education

Gathering and Sharing Child Assessment Data Tip Sheet: Talking With Families About Child Data



Focus on the positive.

Highlight the child's strengths and successes. Invite the parent to share what the child does well, what the child enjoys, and how the child builds relationships with others.

Use child development resources that your program provides.

It can be helpful to have reference material or resources available to share with parents. This can help you and parents to understand children's behavior in the context of typical development. Find out whether your curriculum provides information about typical child development. Consider the materials available from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention about developmental milestones:

<http://www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/actearly/milestones/>

Stay specific.

Conversations are easier when you can discuss specific examples of behaviors or skills. Refer to the materials you identified about typical child development or curricular goals. You might say, "Jeremy is starting to copy some capital letters in his name. This is exactly what we would expect a 4-year-old to be doing."

Listen.

Ask the family questions, pause often to allow time for comments and reflections, and follow their lead. Ask what they think about the information you are discussing. If they seem uncomfortable, notice and respond respectfully. You might say, "It seems like this surprised you. Can you tell me more about that?"

If you have concerns about development, use available resources.

Talk to your supervisor about referring a family to their pediatrician or local school district for additional screening or support.

Adapted from:

U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. (n.d.). *Tips for talking with parents about developmental concerns*. https://www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/actearly/pdf/parents_pdfs/tipstalkingparents.pdf

For more information about this resource, please contact us:
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