

Early Edu Module3: Resources For Families

Kathleen Meeker: So, if a family has concerns about their child's behavior, they may come to the educator to talk about these concerns and to get some ideas or some resources. And it can be overwhelming to families to think through--and to educators--to think through all of the different roles that are out there in the community to support kids and their behavior or their development.

And so, I think often the simplest recommendation is the best. And so, if a family would come to a provider and the provider isn't quite sure where to send them, my recommendation is always to refer back to the pediatrician if the family has concerns about their child's development. So, the pediatrician can start thinking through development and developmental screeners and has kind of a wide--may have a wide view on what's available in the community.

If the family comes to you and wants to think through some resources or support for their child and their child's behavior, I think if you have access to any resources related to early childhood mental health consultation, those are great services to tap into.

And some agencies, non-profits, or others that provide early childhood mental health consultation supports, they may have services that are accessible to families that would be great to tap into those networks. And that's about knowing your local or your regional resources that are available to you.

And so, I think those are the first--that's kind of the first -- those are the first lines of contact that you might try and open up for families. They may also find -- depending on their concerns about their child and what they're concerned about, you may find that referring them to their local school district may be a really good resource for them.

So, that's a nice, easy access point for a lot of services. So, the child may get screened by their local school district to see if they're--they need additional assessment to see if maybe there might be some services that would--that the child would qualify for. So, you can always refer a family to their school district, and their school district can help them--even for very young children-- can help them identify the resources that are available. Sometimes--so definitely when a child is 3, referring them to their school district can help them kind of start a process of conversations about local resources available through the district. And in many districts, children younger than 3 can also access that pathway as well, depending on how services are provided.