



Family-Centered Intervention Series

Informed Decision-Making

Helping families make informed and deliberate decisions is a hallmark of family-centered early intervention. To improve family engagement in informed decision-making, try using these family-centered strategies.

- Open, honest, and regular communication builds trust and helps align goals.
- Share facts about the child's development, assessments, and available services using plain, jargon-free language.
- Ensure that information is based on the most recent research and best practices.
- Explain both strengths and areas of concern to give a balanced picture.
- Understand that how you share information (tone, body language, formality) may influence how it is received.
- Present information in a way that respects cultural norms and preferences.
- Offer translated materials and use qualified interpreters when needed.
- Avoid steering families toward one decision; instead, empower them to make informed choices that align with their values.
- Help families think about potential benefits and limitations of each option.
- Encourage families to ask questions and express concerns in a safe, nonjudgmental space.
- Provide written materials or follow-up resources for families to review at their own pace.
- Clearly explain how decisions are made, what the steps are in the intervention process, and what families' rights and responsibilities are.
- Help families understand timelines, service eligibility, and their role in planning.
- Avoid withholding or minimizing challenging information—families deserve full transparency.