



There's More to Caregiver Coaching Than Just Talking

The purpose of early childhood intervention (EI) is to support parents and other caregivers to use everyday activities and routines to promote child learning and development. EI practitioners use coaching to build the capacity of parents and caregivers. Unfortunately, a common misperception of coaching is that it only involves talking in the form of asking questions and making suggestions or sharing information.

Coaching uses 5 research-based characteristics: observation, reflection, action/practice, feedback, and joint planning. Three of the components involve much more than talking.

OBSERVATION happens so the coach can...

- See what the everyday routine or activity typically looks like.
- Determine how to help the caregiver analyze what's working/not working.
- Watch the caregiver use existing and new responsive strategies with the child.
- Identify what adjustments might need to be made to better support the caregiver and child.

To help the caregiver consider possible options to promote the child's participation.

ACTION/PRACTICE is used when...

- The caregiver uses responsive strategies during an activity or routine with the child while the coach provides support as needed.
- The coach uses modeling, verbal prompting, or direct teaching if necessary to support the caregiver within the actual activity.

To ensure the caregiver has the confidence to keep the learning going between visits.

JOINT PLANNING occurs between the caregiver and coach to...

- Prepare the caregiver for practicing responsive strategies that support child participation within specific daily activities between visits.
- Ensure opportunities for observation and action/practice occur as part of a real-life activity during the next visit.

Since this is when most of the child's practice and learning occurs.