

Partnering with Families in Assessment: *Interpreting Assessment with Families*

Use these ideas and questions to build on what you've learned and extend your practice.

THINK ABOUT IT!

- **Self-Reflection**
Use these questions to think about your own practice.
- **Reflect with Others**
Supervisors, directors, coaches, and teachers/providers can be reflective partners.
- **The Power of Practice**
Invite a colleague to join you; observe or record each other and share ideas.

REFLECTIVE QUESTIONS

- After collecting assessment data on a child, how do I review the information with families? How often do I meet with families?
- Do I use more of a “talking at” approach or “talking with” approach in my conversations with families? How might I use a “talking with” approach in future conversations?
- Why is it important to consider families perspectives in interpreting assessment data? How can I invite families to take part in creating learning goals and experiences for children?
- How do I encourage families to tell me what they know about their children’s learning? How do I demonstrate to families that I value that information and use it?
- Am I flexible in my communication approach with my families? Do I balance who leads and who listens when sharing and interpreting assessment information? How can we gain a shared understanding of each child?

TRY IT OUT!

Choose one child in your care and his/her family. Practice a “talking with” approach in your conversation with the family about the child’s progress. Use the following steps from the circle of communication to guide you:

Circle of Communication Steps	Teacher/Provider Key Questions and Considerations
Share	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ What am I sharing? ■ How will I open up the dialogue?
Ask-Listen	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ What key questions am I asking to find out more? ■ What is the family telling me? ■ Do I need clarification?
Interpret	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ This is what I observe ... ■ This is what the family observes ... ■ Do we have a shared understanding?
Act-Connect	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Based on our shared understanding, let’s set some learning goals. ■ This is what I have planned ... what do you think? ■ How would you like to follow up?

How Did It Go?

Reflect on your assessment conversation with the family. How did the “talking with” approach go? What were some areas of strength? What were some challenges? What questions or considerations would you add to the circle of communication steps? What would you do to improve your “talking with” approach with families?

What Next?

Continue to practice your “talking with” approach with families as you discuss children’s progress. Meet with each family in your program regularly and use the circle of communication steps to guide you in your conversations. As you get more comfortable with each step, take note of how you are building your capacity to have open, two-way conversations and what steps in the process you would like to improve.