

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

TWO APPROACHES TO ENGAGE FAMILIES IN INTERPRETING ASSESSMENT

APPROACH #1: Talking At



Katarin has collected multiple pieces of assessment data about Jimmy, a four-year-old in her class. She has reviewed the assessment data with her teaching assistant and feels prepared to discuss the findings and her recommendations with Jimmy's family.

Let's listen in on a meeting between Katarin and Jimmy's mother, Carmen.

Katarin: As I've shared before, Jimmy is very engaged in class. I've observed that he really likes books about counting, and he can count small sets of five to seven objects and say how many objects are in the group. I've set a few goals for Jimmy that will support his math progress, and, over the next few months, I'll be working on these goals with him. I will let you know how it's going.

Carmen: I'm glad to know Jimmy is good at math. If there is anything I can work on at home with him, please let me know.

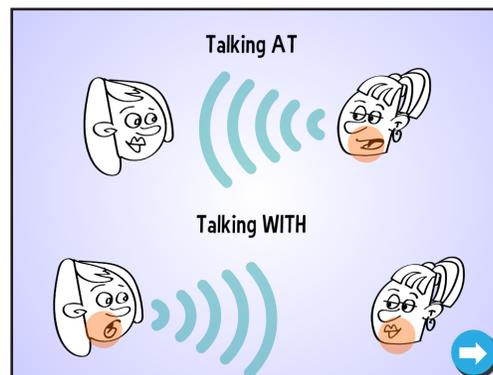
APPROACH #2: Talking With

Let's listen to how Katarin uses strategies from the circle of communication to "talk with" Carmen about Jimmy's math skills at a recent family/teacher conference.

Katarin: I'm glad to talk with you about Jimmy today. I've enjoyed watching him grow and develop in all areas of learning. Is there a particular area you'd like to discuss first?

Carmen: I'd like to talk about math. Jimmy loves doing math at home with his brother. He is really good at counting and saying how many there are in a group.

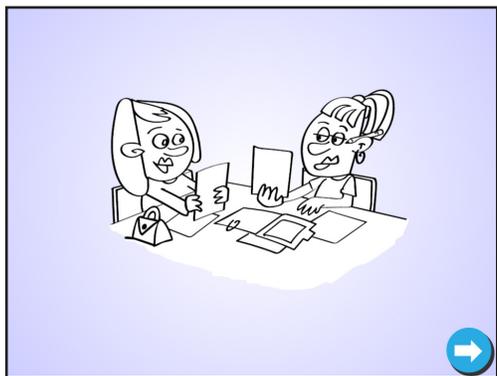
Katarin: Yes, Jimmy is demonstrating understanding in most areas in math, including counting and quantity, as you mentioned. I noticed that he really likes books about counting. He can count small sets of five to seven objects



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APPROACH #2: Talking With *Continued*



and say how many objects are in the group. Let's look at his portfolio. Here is a picture that Jimmy painted. When I asked him how many flowers he drew, he counted "One, two, three, four, five," and said, "Five."

Carmen: It's the same at home. He likes to count when I ask him "How many?"

Katarin: Before we look at other areas of Jimmy's progress, what specific math goals would you like to see us working on with Jimmy?

Carmen: Another thing Jimmy likes is to play math games on my phone. And it's amazing! He can even add numbers correctly. Yesterday, he even knew that two plus one was three! Can you work with him in class on addition and subtraction?

Katarin: That is a good idea for Jimmy. In my observations, I have noted that Jimmy is building his skills in this area. For example, during snack time he asked me for more orange slices. He had one and I gave him three more. When I asked him how many pieces he had all together, he counted and said "four." We will continue to build on Jimmy's addition and subtraction skills.

Carmen: I think he is ready for this too. He loves math and this goal seems like a good one for him. What sorts of things can we do at home to help Jimmy with this?

Katarin: Let's talk about some activities to do at home that we will be doing in class. Then we can check in after a few days to see how Jimmy is progressing.

Find a partner and revisit the "Talking With" conversation between Katarin and Carmen. Highlight where Katarin uses the circle of communication strategies in her conversation:

- Share specific observations.
- Invite the family's perspective.
- Interpret the information together, taking into consideration family's explanations and perspectives.
- Set goals with the family and plan ways to work together to reach goals.