

EI/ECSE Intake Visit

In a Nutshell...

The intake visit is often the first face-to-face meeting with families. We and the family form first impressions of one another. Information is exchanged. Timelines are underway. We must build productive relationships, come to an understanding of the family's priorities and concerns, and gather the information needed to make decisions with the family about how to move forward. We must be thoughtful about this visit. What is its primary purpose? Who should be involved? What questions are asked? What information is shared?

Whatever the answers to the questions above, we need to be mindful that this is the beginning of relationships between families and teams, relationships which set the stage for subsequent contacts and visits. Be thoughtful about your "tone", the way you present yourselves, the way information is shared. The intake visit is first and foremost about getting to know families and sharing a bit about your program.

Key principles to consider...

1. **Thoughtful questions pay off.** Be thoughtful about your questions...ask only those that help develop a supportive, meaningful plan for children and families. E.g. "Talk about how your child spends their day" versus "Did you smoke during pregnancy, head circumference at birth, pre-natal visits by the mother?"
2. **Proven techniques help guide productive interviews.** Knowledge of formal and informal supports can be critical in the development of a support plan. Eco-maps have demonstrated their usefulness when gathering this type of information.
3. **Key people for Key information.** Give careful consideration to "who" might participate in this visit....families very much appreciate sharing their story only one time. If the information would be helpful to the services coordinator as well as the EI/ECSE provider, perhaps both should be present.
4. **Talk less, listen more.** Leave your clipboard and medical history form in the car/office ...few things say "medical model" more clearly than a clipboard and standardized form. A collegial, not superior/inferior tone should be the goal. Strive to communicate that the EI/ECSE program is based upon collaborative relationships between families and providers.
5. **Clear honest advertising sets clear expectations.** Be succinct and clear in a description of the EI/ECSE program supports and services---expectations are formed based upon what you say and the written information you provide. Be sure the information is an accurate depiction of your program components and processes.

Why is the intake so important?

The intake visit is critical for establishing rapport with families, listening to their questions and concerns, gathering information about current and desired formal and informal supports, and determining the family's interest in proceeding with the child evaluation process.

Team Assessment Home-Based Item #3

Reference Documents/Materials

- [Understanding Family Ecology](#)
- [RBI 102 FAQ](#)

Samples

- [Eco-map demo](#)

Regulations

- [Rule 52](#)
- [SC manual](#)

Tools

- [Eco-Map script](#)
- [FAQoI](#)
- [SHORE](#)
- [Training PPT for Eco-map](#)