

The Coaching Approach in Early Intervention



Why does this work?

Coaching is an evidence-based practice that involves partnering between caregivers and providers; jointly thinking about what works, does not work, and why; trying ideas with your child; modeling with your child for you; sharing information; and jointly planning next steps.

We will provide information and support to make the most of your “teachable moments” with your child. This way, your child receives quality intervention all the time, not just during a home visit with your Primary Service Provider (PSP). It is far more helpful for a child to have a caregiver who has been coached to provide support throughout the day than to have three intense hours with a professional and no carryover.

Our approach is to help you know how to help your child. As a result, you may see a difference between what your physician has recommended and the plan that the IFSP “team” (parents, evaluators, and service coordinators) develops. If there is a difference, it does not necessarily mean we have different goals for your child, only a different approach to achieving them.

You might have expected home visits to focus only on your child, but your PSP’s focus is actually on the adults in the child’s life.

Why does this work? Coaching is an evidence-based practice used for interacting with caregivers to recognize what they are already doing that works to support child learning and development, as well as building upon existing or new ideas within the natural environment and daily routines.

Intervention Opportunities

Skill: Increased expressive language

Outcome: Daily, during mealtime, Jane will use words to request preferred items (ex. more, drink, cracker, cup etc.)

Routine	Daily Learning Opportunities	Weekly Parent/Guardian Opportunities	Weekly Provider Learning Opportunities
Meals/Snacks	6-8 x per day	42-56	1-2

Skill: Improved head and neck control

Outcome: Daily, John will turn his head to the right and left to look at toys while in supported sitting.

Routine	Daily Learning Opportunities	Weekly Parent/Guardian Opportunities	Weekly Provider Learning Opportunities
Play Time	5-6 x per day	28-42	1-2
Bath Time	1 x per day	7	1-2
Meal Time	6-8 x per day	42-56	1-2
	TOTAL	77-105	3-6

supported

The Role of the Caregiver in Coaching



You are your child's first teacher. You have the opportunity to work with your child throughout the day, every day. Your interactions are key to your child's development and establishing a foundation for early learning.

During each visit, you will create a joint plan with your primary service provider (PSP). The idea of the joint plan is to intentionally plan for how to use a strategy between visits when the PSP is not present.

The joint plan is a shared process. You are encouraged to contribute ideas for how you could use what has been learned during each visit to support your child's development within the natural environment and your daily activities. There will also be opportunities for you to show the strategies you have tried, problem solve, and practice new ideas and strategies with your PSP.

Information adapted from the works of R. McWilliam, D. Rush, M. Shelden, L. Cook Pletcher, and N. Younggren.



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