***Early Childhood Education Service Delivery: Routines Based Early Intervention***

**A Perkins eLearning Webinar Event, presented by DeEtte Snyder**

**January 16, 2015**

**Transcript of Participant Q&A**

**Q: What is the role of cultural competence when working within home settings?**

*I think it is always important for service providers to leave their judgment at the door…and I have trained the people I used to supervise on cultural sensitivity and again – ‘leave your judgment at the door.’ Also, be open to how other people live…and I also feel it’s important if you…don't be afraid to ask questions to a family, in a sensitive way. If you possibly do not understand certain cultural aspects, go ahead and ask and say, “I’m not familiar with this idea. Can you give me a little bit more information about that?” and I think that most of the time families are real receptive and understanding and maybe they are honored that you even care enough to ask.*

*I had a preschool classroom once were all the children spoke only Spanish, so I really had to be real humble and attempt to speak as much Spanish as I could, and the families really honored me for trying…and for just trying…but I think the number one thing is to just leave your judgments at the door, especially when we might be walking into a home or a family situation that is very different from our own.*

*Parenting skills are going to be different, and so that’s where you really have to think that isn’t your child, this is their child, and you wouldn’t want anybody telling you how to parent your child, and so I think that we really need to be careful about that, we can support and give resources and information…but we have to be really careful about judgment calls in terms of parenting styles and we need to respect families and what their priorities and concerns based on their cultural, economic…anything…so leave your judgment at the door.*

*I think that it’s really hard for professionals because…especially, for instance, I can only speak for a TVI, I can only speak for… ‘My God, this child is totally blind! We’ve got to start going on Braille. This is so important,’ you know…but that family might not be ready for Braille. That might be something very…um… they’re just not ready for that yet, and I... In Arizona, I worked with a Native American family, their little girl was totally blind and I was just so excited to bring my Braille books in and was just like, ‘Oh, let’s just get this family… I mean, this little girl needs Braille and boy, this family should just be so excited that I’m bringing them free Braille books’ Well, this Native American family…again, the Navajo language is not a written language, it’s more of an oral language, so I didn’t…I didn’t think about that…and exposing them to Braille was like them saying, ‘Wait a minute – you mean my child is blind and will never see?’ So, I didn’t realize that that’s what they were thinking, and so when I left there, I was like,’ Oh, my goodness, that was a huge, huge mistake’. So you just need to be really careful about where a family is and what that family’s priority is, compared to your priority, because that might two completely different things, and I realized at that moment that I needed to ease them in to the concepts and to exposure to Braille way slower that what I originally did.*

**Q: Could you provide few of the parent lesson examples from ViSioN?**

*Yes, let me see! Since TVIs are in the room, let’s do a vision one…*

*Okay, so this one is in the area of sensory; and it’s on vision, and the skill is “experiencing things out of reach.”*

*The child says, “It is essential to remember that things out of my reach will mostly remain very abstract to me unless you provide me with a better way, a better understanding of things with which I cannot have first-hand experience. Talk to me about things out of my reach and compare them to things that I have experienced. It is vital that I experience many things to build a foundation for later, abstract concepts.”*

*Then there is a list of different ideas and strategies to help the family help their child experience things out of their reach.*

*For instance:*

*“When your child begins to reach out and touch things help him touch all of the things in the room that he cannot see clearly. Lift him up to touch the ceiling, help him feel a round a doorframe, let him touch or look at pictures and decorations on a wall. If you’re in a room with cupboards let him feel as you open the cupboards, possibly to get something out.”*

*So there is a whole list of different strategies for parents to help their child with that particular concept. That’s just one. There are, like, 200 examples of them in this book.*

**Q: Is the ViSioN Program a workbook with activities?**

*No, it’s not. It’s a book that is kind of like a guidebook for professionals working with families, so there’s things like different matrixes where you can set up a routine- to develop routines with families…help them figure out what a beginning, a middle, and an end of an activity is. So, there’s not really activities but there’s ‘activities’ in terms of a parent lesson. So it’s not a ‘recipe book’ it’s more of a guidebook, if that makes sense.*

**Q: How do you work with families whose environments are chaotic and often resist routines?**

*I think that’s, you know, that’s interesting because this is the environment that the child lives in, so we need to respect that and realize that that’s just real life. That’s real life.*

*I believe that every …regardless if you feel like it’s an actual routine, things happen in a certain way. So they might not have a routine ‘day’, like breakfast, then playtime, then diaper changing, then nap time…it might not be a ‘scheduled’ day but there are always routines within a routine, so if a mommy is going to change a diaper, they’re usually going to change the diaper in the same way every day. They’re going to feed their child in the same way every day. They’re going to put their child to bed the same way every day. They might play with them the same way every day. They’re going to put them in the car seat the same way every day…and so we, as service providers, just need to take a look at what’s happening to the day and maybe clue the parent in*

*‘You know what? You ARE doing a routine activity and you just didn’t know it, and so let’s take what you’re doing and build on that.’*

*So again, family centers of practice are all built on strength of children and families and not necessarily deficits. I also have a motto of ‘at any given point, a family or a mom is doing the best they can.’ So you have to take that ‘best they can’ and what they’re doing really good now, even though it might be this much (uses fingers to illustrate a ‘small amount’) and start to expand it and start to build on that, because again, at any given moment a parent is doing the best they can, and our job is to help them see that they’re doing something really good to build their confidences and their competency in what they’re doing. So, take what can get and build on it-it’s there. It’s there.*

**Q: If you have a student who is totally blind and the family is adamant that they want to begin pre-Braille instruction, how does that work using this model?**

*I think that it is very appropriate to begin pre-Braille instruction if that is a family priority.*

*Again, the idea is to follow the family’s lead on what they want and what supports they need.  If they want pre-Braille, then give it to them.  There are many ways to introduce books and stories, and Braille to babies, in the same way you would do that for a child with sight.  If literacy and share story experiences are a part of the family’s routine and are valued, then we should give them ways for them to do that with their child who happens to be blind.  There are no limits to how we support families!*