CHILD DEVELOPMENT EXPECTATIONS IN HISPANIC FAMILIES

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What we hope you will learn today:

- Some of the cultural and family dynamics of working Hispanic families.
- What it takes for Early Intervention providers to feel comfortable about working with Hispanic families.
- What might it take for Hispanic families to feel comfortable about working with Early Intervention providers.
- How to explain Early Intervention’s
Please Remember

- Hispanic parents want their children to be healthy.
- Hispanic families want their children to be educated.
- Hispanic families don’t want their children to forget their heritage.

- Above all, Hispanic parents want their children to be safe and protected. Just like all of us!
Latinos?  
Hispanics?  
Columbians?  
Mexicans?  
Guatemalans?  
Cubans?  
Hondurans?
Hispanic or Latino

- People born in Central and South America use various terms to refer to themselves:
  - Hispano-Hispanic
  - Latino- Latin
  - Or by the country of origin: Mexican, Colombian, Ecuadorian, Cuban, Argentinean, etc.
Self Awareness

- Self perception plays a major role in our ability to provide services.

- We all have individual reactions based on our own histories and characteristics.

- Recognizing this, we can then begin to see others for their unique qualities and diversities.
Diversity Wheel

- This is a Mexican American family.
- They are from Honduras.
- His family is from Ecuador.
- He is Columbian.

- Each cultural/ethnic identification suggests a set of generalized expectations. Nonetheless, culture is only one element of who a person is.
What is Culture?

- How people live
- Role expectations
- Child rearing practices
- Attitudes about time and money
- Definitions of achievements, concepts of beauty, art, music, food, and a host of other things

- Nonetheless, culture is only one element of who a person is.
Where do we Begin?

- The process begins with understanding our own personal history and how it influences our perceptions about life.

- As a provider we must begin the process of understanding how similar and/or different factors may influence the perceptions of the families we serve.

- Finding common ground between the providers and the families perceptions which allow the provider to start an appropriate and effective intervention plan.
We all have unique qualities.

2 grown adult women, from the same town, went to the same schools and church, same economic group. Their appearances was similar, they wore similar clothes, and had the same accents.

The significant difference between these two was that one was from a family that was first generation in the United States having survived crossing the border risking their lives with only what they were able to carry. The other girl was second generation; her parents were born in this country.

Facts that shaped how their families responded to life situations.
Bridging the Gap

- It is important to pay attention to personal feeling, discomforts, and uncertainties when working with families.
- Many families may appreciate the opportunity to talk about themselves.
- Having a family focused approach is crucial in supporting families and providing services.
Family Dynamics

- The 1st and most important value is **Family**
  - Most American families are referred to as Nuclear families
  - Father, mother, son and daughter

- Hispanic families
  - May include the extended family: grandparents, aunts, uncles, cousins, nieces and nephews

- In most Hispanic families, the father is the head of the family and the mother is responsible for the home.

- Individuals within the family have a moral responsibility to aid other members of the family experiencing financial problems, unemployment, poor health conditions or other life events.
Family Dynamics

- Families often gather together to celebrate holidays, birthdays, baptisms, first communions, graduations and weddings.
- Hispanic families instill in their children the importance of honor, good manners, and respect for authority and the elderly.
- Preserving the Spanish language within the family is a common practice in most Hispanic homes.
Education

- There is a stereotype that Hispanic do not value education.

- Where in fact, Hispanic families do greatly value education.
What may differ, however, is how they show that they value education.

Traditionally in Hispanic culture, the teacher is viewed with great respect.

The teachers are seen as the experts.

Because of the high respect with which the teacher is held, parents are reluctant to question the teacher or give suggestions, or to appear to be interfering in the educational process.

This may give the appearance of not valuing education.
Language Use

- Some Hispanic are bilingual. Other Hispanics are monolingual Spanish-speaking or monolingual English-speaking.
- In other cases, a Hispanic family may speak an indigenous language as a first language, Spanish as the second and English as a third language.
Religion

- Common religion of Hispanic culture is Roman Catholic Church (about 90%).
- Large number of Hispanic children are still baptized as Catholic’s”.
- Hispanic families believe it is important to teach their children the beliefs and history of their culture.
- Religion and tradition go hand in hand in most Hispanic families.
Personal Space

- Personal space refers to the amount of physical space that is considered culturally appropriate between people.
- Hispanics have been found to prefer a smaller personal space.
- That is, they feel more comfortable when physically closer to others.
Time Orientation

- There is a difference between future and present-oriented cultures.
- Hispanics tend to be more present oriented. The quality of the interpersonal interaction is more important than the length of time.
Gender Roles

- Boys are taught to work hard and are educated on the importance of providing for their families when they grow up.
- Girls learn feminine traits and are taught the importance of having children when they grow up where their roles will change to being a mother.
- Children are taught to adhere to these beliefs, values, and religions of their culture because they believe that these aspects are most important and will aid in positive development.
Now, let’s hit it out of the Ballpark with our Families!
Holding a Meeting or Visit

• You may need to have a interpreter, if you are not proficient in Spanish. Do not rely on older children in the home to be your interpreter.

• You will need to allow for time to establish respect for your audience as well as show an interest in them and their lives.

• There may not be as many questions as you anticipate.
Remember

- Cultural communication is an ongoing process. Mistakes are inevitable, but sensitivity to cultural and communication issues can enhance the quality of education for everyone.
- Unfamiliarity with cultural communication differences can lead to misinterpretation, misunderstanding and even unintentional insult.
Multicultural Collaboration

- Listen actively and empathetically. Try to put yourself in the other person’s shoes.
- Especially when others perceptions or ideas are very different from your own. You might need to operate at the edge of your own comfort zone.
- Remember that cultural norms may not apply to the behavior of any particular individual.
- We all are shaped by many, many factors—(ethnic background, family, education, personality)
Vital Message

• In 2010 Vital Message training was provided to all early intervention providers to ensure early intervention services across the state were begin provided based on Alabama Early Intervention System (AEIS) standards and regulations.

• This training was a direct change from the Governor’s Interagency Coordinating Council (ICC) to provide consistent information and technical assistance across the state.
Vital Message

- To train, equip, and support parents and caregivers in being the first and best teachers for their child.

- So that they can help their child develop according to his/her individual needs.

- Be able to continue to help their child development when he/she transitions from Early Intervention.
Early Intervention’s 6 Core Values

- Family Centered
- Developmentally Appropriate
- Individualized
- Provided in natural environment
- Trains/equips the parent/caregiver
- Collaborative
Early Intervention’s 6 Core Values

- **Family Centered**
  - Services and supports are aimed at helping the family support and care for your child.
  - Research indicates that a child’s most effective teachers are those with whom they have a nurturing relationship and with whom they spend the most time, such as his or her mother, father, grandparent, childcare provider or primary caregiver.
  - Services should be aimed at supporting families in their roles as parents and helping them by providing formal and informal services to make a developmental difference.
Family Centered

- Who is caring for the child?
- Is there a nurturing relationship?
- How are they interacting with the child while feeding, diapering, playing, and cuddling?
Early Intervention’s 6 Core Values

• **Developmentally Appropriate**
  - It is Early Intervention’s philosophy that training is offered to families with consideration for the projected developmental track of the child based on any number of factors.
  - A team of professionals will assist you with understanding typical development and how your child is likely to develop based on factors which may include a medical diagnosis or delay.
  - Services and home activities are designed to support your child’s development.
Developmentally Appropriate

- Do families understand typical development:
  - Is it important at what stage they walk or talk?
  - Do they want their children to be socially active outside of the family?
  - Are they concern if their child is off the bottle by 12 month or at what age they can use a spoon and fork?
  - Do they clearly understand a child’s medical?
Early Intervention’s 6 Core Values

- **Individualized**
  - Family defined outcomes and the interventions to address these outcomes should be as individualized as the families we serve.
  - No two IFSPs should look alike because the functional needs of the children and families we serve are different.
  - Early Intervention services should be individualized to meet the needs of the child/family outcomes.
  - Early intervention services could be changed in terms of frequency and length based on the progress towards meeting outcomes.
Individualized

- Outcome: “Theirs” our “Ours”?  
- Priorities: “Theirs” our “Ours”?  
- Have you clearly explained who will be a part of their team and do they agree?  
- Who would the family like to see as a part of their team?  
- Do they understand the plan can and does change
Early Intervention’s 6 Core Values

- **Provided in natural environment**
  - Early Intervention is provided where children and families typically would be: home, childcare, playgrounds, etc.
  - Natural environment, however, is more than just a place. Early Interventions must include the daily activities and routines of the family.
  - Providing services in an artificial environment is not considered an appropriate natural environmental.
Provided in natural environment
Early Intervention’s 6 Core Values

- **Trains/Equips the Parent/Caregiver**
  - Early intervention is a family/caregiver training program.
  - The child’s development is the primary responsibility of the family.
  - It is Early Interventions responsibility to aid and support families in this process by:
    - Teaching families the skills they need and emphasizing that frequent practice is needed to assure skill development and retention.
    - Making practical suggestions and modeling strategies that fit in their everyday routines.
    - Addressing the family defined outcomes identified during the family assessment that will address the individualized challenges of the family/caregiver.
Trains/Equips the Parent/Caregiver

- Teach families developmental skills
- Emphasizing frequent practice for development and retention
- Suggestions
- Modeling
- Working daily on activities through daily routines
Early Intervention’s 6 Core Values

- **Collaborative**
  - All family needs cannot be met by Early Intervention alone.
  - Establishing community partnerships (informal support) to assist with family concerns is a must.
  - Collaborating with agencies such as Children’s Rehabilitation Services (i.e. clinics) to assist families in meeting their needs is part of a service coordinator’s role if needed and a pig part of how Early Intervention assist families.
Collaborative
Early Intervention is not a game, it is a Passion!
May we personally thank each and everyone of you for the passion and love you show our Early Intervention families everyday.