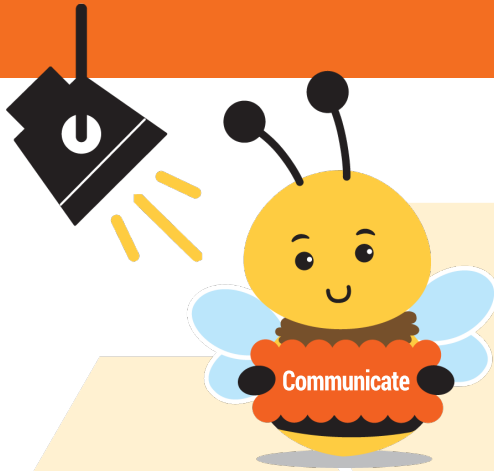


# Working with Early Intervention Team: Communication Tips for Building Relationships



Infants and toddlers with disabilities or developmental delays who receive early intervention services tend to develop and learn better than those without the services. There are a number of providers who will work together to provide early intervention to your child. An Early Intervention Service Coordinator will guide and support you and your family in learning the options available and choosing the type and frequency of services your child will receive. Early Intervention (EI) Team Members support your family and the healthy growth and development of your child. Effective communication is the key to building strong relationships with your child's EI Team.

## Tips for Good Communication

**Get to know your EI Team.** You'll want to feel comfortable with the professionals working with your child. Asking questions can be a good way to gather information that is important to your family. Here are a few questions to get you started and there are more on the next page. You may want to write your specific questions down and have this sheet handy to remind you what to ask. Asking the right questions can help both you and the team members understand each other's vision and goals for your child.



After getting to know your EI Team, if it seems like the match between the team member and your family is not a good fit, you can contact your Early Intervention Service Coordinator to discuss your options.

- Ask the team member what they prefer to be called.
- How long have they been working in this field?
- What led them to this career?
- You may want to ask if they smoke (children can be exposed to toxins on hands and clothing).
- If you have pets, ask if they mind being around animals.
- Ask any questions that are important to you and your family.

**How we ask questions is important. Pay attention to your nonverbal communication.** Your body language, eye contact, hand gestures, and the tone of your voice can make the person you are speaking with more or less responsive to hearing your point of view.

**Take the time to practice active listening.** Active listening involves paying close attention to what the other person is saying. You can ask clarifying questions. Then repeat back to them what you heard them say. ("So, what you're saying is...") Through active listening, you can better understand what the other person is trying to say and respond appropriately.



## Questions for Early Intervention Service Coordinator:

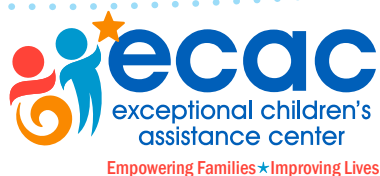
Do I need to pay each session or do you bill me? Are these services covered by my insurance?  
How often will we meet to review the effectiveness of the treatment plan?  
How should I contact you if I have concerns before the official plan review date?  
What is the best way to let you know if I have questions or concerns about some aspect of care?

## Questions for Contacting Providers:

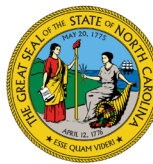
How do I get in touch with you?  
Will appointments be scheduled in advance or do I need to schedule after each visit?  
What happens if we need to reschedule?  
What should I do if I need to reach you after hours or in an emergency?  
Do you communicate with our child's physician?

## Questions about the Therapy and Exercise Plan:

What is the goal of this type of service?  
How will I be involved with my child's services?  
How will we know if this intervention is working for my child?  
Why are these activities good for my child?  
What skills will we focus on during this activity?  
Why do you feel that this activity is the best choice?  
Can you share additional information about this intervention with me?  
Do I need to get any special items or do you provide materials for us?  
Are there resources where I can find equipment to borrow or rent?  
Do I need to prepare my child or the area where activity will take place?  
Do I need to make sure that we are alone in the home (if there are other family members at home)?  
How will you respond if my child gets upset or frustrated this activity?  
How often should I do these exercises with my child?  
How can I add these activities into our daily routine to make it easier to work on?  
Are there other things I can do to support my child and help them better cope with their challenges?  
What should I do if the problems get worse or I do not see any improvement?  
If I don't agree with the plan or activities, how do we move forward?



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