

## Tip Sheets

### Collaboration Between Early Childhood Special Education (ECSE) and Early Childhood Educators

Collaboration between early childhood special education providers (ECSE teachers, occupational therapists, physical therapists, speech-language pathologists, etc.) and early childhood educators (i.e., centers, in-home, etc.) is essential for a child's overall success. Here's how early childhood educators can make collaboration happen:

#### Caregiver Consent

For ECSE providers to communicate and collaborate with early childhood educators, parents must first provide written consent. This form is called a release of information and must be on file prior to any collaboration.

#### Request A Team Meeting

- With parent permission and involvement, a team meeting with everyone who cares for, teaches, and supports the child should be prioritized.
- Meetings can occur in-person, virtually, or over the phone.
- A team meeting is an opportunity to discuss collaboration, priorities, and concerns.

#### Advocate for Collaboration

- Share priorities and concerns to support the need for collaboration.
- Maintain up-to-date documentation and observations specific to those priorities and concerns.
- Request copies of the child's service plan (IFSP/IEP) visuals, social stories, accommodations, ECSE classroom schedule, ECSE provider contact information, etc.



#### Be Open to Capacity-Building & Coaching

To build your capacity in supporting a child with special needs, you must be willing to try new strategies, discuss difficult routines, and engage in reflective conversations with ECSE providers.

#### Communicate, Communicate, Communicate

- Collaboration works best when communication takes priority.
- Communicate with caregivers, ECSE providers, and all child care staff working with the child. Communication can be through emails, texts, phone calls, in-person visits, etc.
- Communicate celebrations and frustration.

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