



Using Primary Service Providers & Coaching in Early Intervention Programs

Implementing a Primary Service Provider/Coaching Model

Implementing a primary service provider/coaching model is a process that includes many facets. It is important to start with a cross disciplinary team that wants to improve their skills, try new approaches, resolve challenges and build collegial relationships. This same team needs to be willing to meet on a regular basis, be able to schedule co-visits with their colleagues, when appropriate, and receive feedback from each other. There are several options for starting the process: a team can begin with newly referred children only, they can try this model on a handful of families currently enrolled in the program, use the model only on the families currently enrolled or a combination of any of these options. Lastly, as the team implements the primary service provider/coaching model questions may arise as to what to do now if team members are no longer "playing with the children", "using their hands the majority of the visit", and "bringing their toys". Their role now is to facilitate participation between the caregiver(s) and the child and in so doing use "their hands" to help figure out what works with the child and model/teach to share new ideas with learners in their environment, with their toys.

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Components of the Coaching Process

Initiation

- Identify coaching opportunities
- Clarify the purpose and outcomes of coaching
- Identify and address any barriers to making the coaching process effective
- Clarify the ground rules

Observation

- Coach observes the learner in some type of action or practice
- Learner observes the coach modeling some type of action or activity
- Learner observes him- or herself (self-observation)
- Coach and/or learner observe aspects of the environment

Action

- Coach models a skill for the learner
- Learner practices using an existing or new skill discussed with the coach
- Learner experiences a behavior, issue, or situation that precipitates a discussion with the coach
- Learner anticipates a behavior, issue, or experience to discuss with the coach prior to the event

Reflection

- Assist the learner in discovering what he or she already knows or needs to discover by asking the right questions in the right way
 - What's happening now? What happened?
 - What do you want to accomplish?
 - How did you decide where to focus?
 - What have you tried? What did you do?
 - How could you do it differently?
 - How will you know when you are successful?
- Provide feedback on observation and/or action
- Share information, resources, and supports (as necessary)
- Confirm understanding of the learner
- Review what has been accomplished
- Plan new observations and/or actions or strategies to implement between coaching conversations

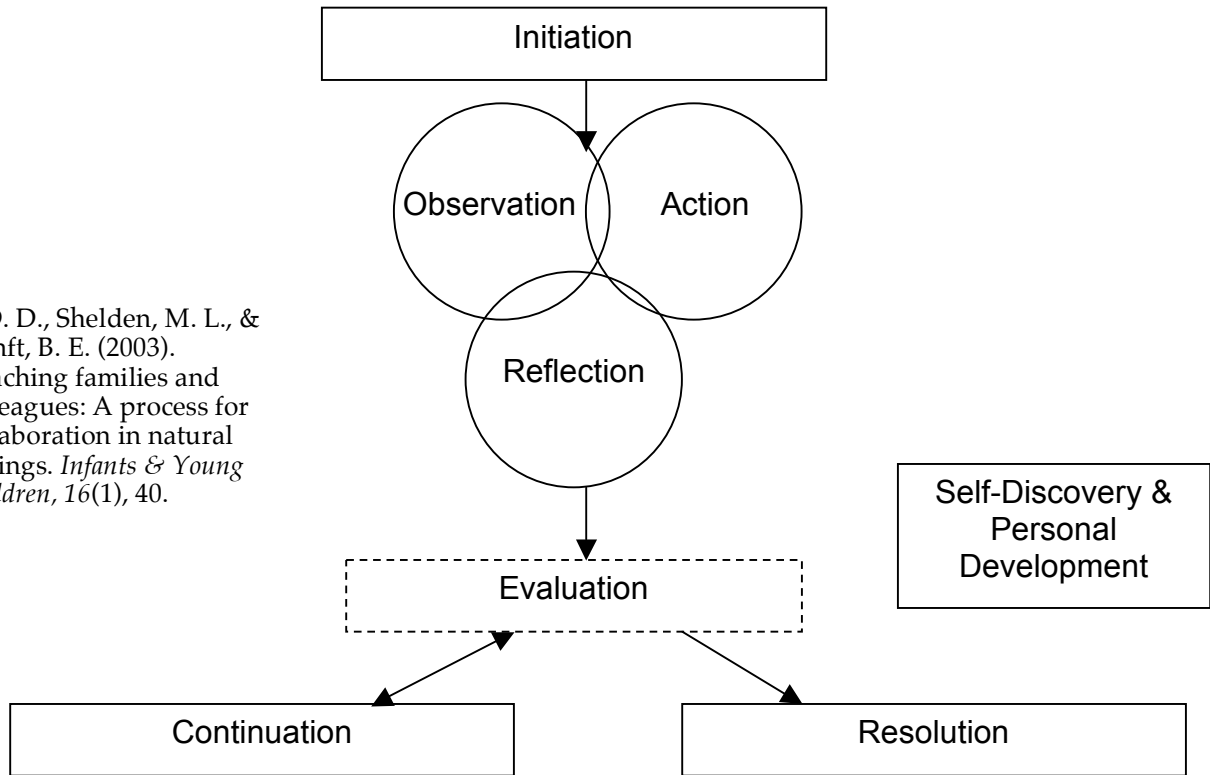
Evaluation

- Review the coaching process
 - Continuation
 - Resolution

Hanft, B. E., Rush, D. D., & Shelden, M. L. (2004). *Coaching families and colleagues in early childhood* (p. 60). Baltimore: Paul H. Brookes. Reprinted with permission.



The Coaching Process



Rush, D. D., Shelden, M. L., & Hanft, B. E. (2003). Coaching families and colleagues: A process for collaboration in natural settings. *Infants & Young Children, 16*(1), 40.

Kinlaw (1999) defined coaching as a shared conversation between two individuals who each have information and skills to gain from interacting with each other. Professionals have skills and specific intervention strategies to share about children’s growth and development. Families and other caregivers have the most information about child’s routines, daily activities, likes, dislikes, strengths and needs. Together, the families and the professionals can begin to examine: 1) what is already happening that works for this child; and 2) what other natural learning opportunities exist for the child when the coach (professional) is not present, thus initiating the coaching process that is depicted in the above diagram.

The specific components of the coaching process include: 1) initiation, 2) observation, 3) action, 4) reflection, and 5) evaluation. Although the diagram above may suggest coaching is a linear process, it is not. Observation, action and reflection are interwoven and important to the process being meaningful to the learning but can occur anytime during the coaching relationship. Actually, during the coaching process the learner and the coach may move in and out of these interwoven components several times. The initiation and the evaluation phases bind the process together so ultimately the learner and coach can jointly develop goals and address those same goals.

Hanft, B. E., Rush, D. D., & Shelden, M. L. (2004). *Coaching families and colleagues in early childhood* (p. 31-33). Baltimore: Paul H. Brookes.



The Coach's Goal

The early childhood coach's goal for the learner is sustained excellent performance in which the learner has the competence and confidence to engage in self reflection, self correction, and generalization of new skills and strategies to other situations as appropriate.

Coaches consider multiple factors when initiating a relationship with a learner including motivation, self-direction, critical thinking skills, integration of new information and learning styles. The chart below assists coaches in understanding learners who have visual, auditory, kinesthetic (active) needs by giving examples of what these learners might be doing during the coaching process.



Learning Styles for Coaching

Visual	Auditory	Kinesthetic
Caregiver observes therapist	Caregiver summarizes feedback from therapist	Caregiver keeps journal
Caregiver observes others	Caregiver narrates actions from a video	Caregiver practices actions
Caregiver watches video	Caregiver listens to audiotape	Caregiver demonstrates actions to others
Caregiver reads an article and/or looks at illustration	Caregiver calls another caregiver	Caregiver joins support group or visits another caregiver

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Coaching Follow-Up Planning Tool

Once the coach and the learner mutually agree that their goals are met, they create a plan for ongoing improvement of skills or behaviors, including a plan to reinitiate the coaching relationship, if necessary. This plan is the final step of the coaching process.

Date:

Learner:

Coach:

Coaching topic:

Coach/learner plan next steps			
	Who?	What?	When?
Observations			
Practice			
Resources			

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Coaching Follow-Up Planning Tool (Example)

Once the coach and the learner mutually agree that their goals are met, they create a plan for ongoing improvement of skills or behaviors, including a plan to reinstate the coaching relationship, if necessary. This plan is the final step of the coaching process.

Date: January 27, 2006

Learner: Grandma

Coach: Grace

Coaching topic: Alexis' glasses and activity settings

Coach/learner plan next steps			
	Who?	What?	When?
Observations	Grandma Mom	Vision problems Scheduled appointment with eye doctor – got glasses	Last week Alexis saw eye doctor; this week (1/25) she got her glasses
Practice	Grandma	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Encourage Alexis to say a word related to the action on movie. Choice making- saying the word of the choice back to her to see if she will repeat 	During TV time this coming week (1/27 to 2/3) Mealtime
Resources	Ear, Nose, Throat doctor Eye doctor Salvation Army Library	Checkup Glasses Get work station Check out books	2/28/06 1/25/06 Before 2/3/06 Before 2/3/06

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Coaching Worksheet

The coaching worksheet outlines both the components of the coaching process and elements within these same components. This tool can be used before, during and after any coaching conversation. The coach and/or learner as a way to document observations, actions and reflections that occur between or during coaching conversations may complete the worksheet. Both parties at the conclusion of a coaching visit can also complete it jointly. A separate worksheet can be used multiple times or one worksheet can be used across multiple coaching conversations. (Example included in the "Activity" section of this packet.)

Learner: _____ Coach: _____ Date: _____

INITIATION

Coaching opportunity observed or presented	
The purpose of the coaching relationship is	
Intended learner outcomes resulting from the coaching relationship	
Barriers to the coaching process	Strategies to address barriers
Ground rules	

OBSERVATION

What/where

When

Coach observes learner's actions and interactions		
Learner observes coach model actions		
Learner observes self		
Coach/learner observe environment		

**ACTION**

What/where

When

Coach models for learner (coach present)		
Learner practices an action (coach present/absent)		
Learner describes experience (coach absent)		
Coach/learner observe environment		

REFLECTION

Description

Learner reflects on action or observation			
Coach gives feedback about observation or action following reflection			
Learner uses resources (e.g., print, video, peer)			
Coach confirms learner's understanding and summarizes			
Coach/learner plan next steps	Who	What	When
Observations			
Practice			
Resources			



EVALUATION

Coach Self-Reflection

1. Is the learner accomplishing his or her goals?
2. What changes, if any, do I need to make in the coaching process?
3. Should I continue as this learner's coach? (If not, who would be more effective?)

Coach Asks Learner

1. Shall we continue coaching or have your goals been accomplished (continuation)?

If continuing coaching:

- What changes need to be made in the coaching plan?
- What observations and/or actions should take place between coaching sessions?
- How will we communicate in between sessions?
- Do we have a plan for the next session?

2. If goals have been reached (resolution):

- Is the learner committed to and capable of self-assessment, self-correction, and self-generation?
- Has a plan for reinstating coaching been discussed?

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Topic:

How Contextually Mediated Practice™ (CMP) uses everyday activity as sources of learning opportunities for promoting child growth and development



Morning play time on the backyard swing set is a fun place for catching soap bubbles, kicking legs, playing with mom, saying “up,” “down,” and “push,” using sign language, and more!

What research tells us:

Everyday activities that occur naturally as part of ordinary family, community, and early childhood classroom life are excellent **contexts** in which early childhood practitioners can **mediate** parent’s abilities and self-confidence in helping their young children participate and learn successfully in these contexts.

Research findings show that everyday learning opportunities that are based on children’s interests:

- ▶ promote and enhance child development,
- ▶ generate competence that leads to increased child participation in everyday activity settings, and
- ▶ enhance both the competence and confidence of parents in their role as supporters of their children’s learning and development.

Bottomlines

Research findings informing early childhood practices

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Research supports a new way of helping children learn

Contextually Mediated Practice™ (CMP) is an exciting, innovative, and contemporary approach to early childhood intervention and therapy that uses everyday family, community, and early childhood classroom environments and activities as the places and opportunities for young children to learn, develop and grow.

The CMP™ approach to promoting child development is based on findings from research examining the benefits of child learning in natural environments. Researchers at the Orelena Hawks Puckett Institute (Asheville, NC) and the Family, Infant and Preschool Program (Morganton, NC) have developed CMP to promote child and parent participation and competence in learning.

The name of this approach comes from the terms *context*, referring to the everyday activities and environments that serve as sources for supporting and strengthening child learning, and *mediated*, referring to the ways practitioners help parents increase their children’s involvement

in these everyday learning activities.

CMP involves the young child in a wide range of everyday activities and learning opportunities that both strengthen existing abilities and help the child gain new skills and behaviors.

A very important feature of CMP is its focus on learning that is both interest-based and directed by the child. Instead of the parent, teacher, or therapist being the primary planner and director of learning opportunities, the child is seen as the central actor. In CMP, the young child makes learning happen. The child takes part in an everyday experience, opportunity, or event that lets him or her interact with people and objects in ways that lead to recognition of his or her own



Helping mom work in the garden is a natural context for doing things this little girl loves to do: digging, planting, using tools, handling roots, soil, seeds, and plants, discovering earth worms and insects, carrying and pouring water, and much more!

Acting on the Evidence:

Identify the everyday activity settings (at home, in the community, and in classrooms) that give a child chances to do things he or she likes to do. Think about ways to increase children’s participation in these activities. Use various techniques—modeling, conversation, written notes, brainstorming, coaching, etc.—to help parents become confident in their own ability to use everyday activities and children’s interests to encourage child learning.

abilities, to learning about those people and things, and to building skills.

CMP places major emphasis on practices implemented *by parents*. In CMP, practitioners help or mediate parents' own abilities to provide beneficial everyday learning opportunities to their children.

Let's take a look at Contextually Mediated Practices in several everyday family, community, and classroom activity settings:

Family Activity

Four-year-old Zachary loves dishwashing time—standing high on a stepstool at the sink close to mom or dad, wearing an oversized apron, moving his hands through warm, sudsy water, getting to operate the faucet and sprayer hose, and arranging wet cups and plates in the dish rack. His parents appreciate his delight in this routine and have naturally helped him build skills as a junior dishwasher.

Zachary, who was born with Down syndrome, is just beginning to talk. Learning about his involvement in the household dishwashing routine, a consulting speech therapist helped Zachary's parents discover ways to build on his newly emerging interest in talking when they're doing the dishes. Now, when the breakfast table is cleared, Zachary eagerly takes his place at the sink and becomes absorbed in dishwashing fun.

Zachary pulls a coffee mug out of the suds and crows, "Tup!" "That's right! Cup," says Dad. "We're washing all the cups. Can you find another cup?" The two work away, naming objects and asking and answering simple questions about their work. Dad enjoys seeing Zachary's progress and feels confident that he's "making a difference" in his son's learning. Zachary enjoys the pleasant context of this learning opportunity and shows pride in his language accomplishments.

Community Activity

The sandbox is three-year-old Lara's favorite spot at her neighborhood playground. A trip to the playground seems incomplete if it doesn't include a bit of digging and pouring fun.

Noting this natural interest in sandplay, Lara's physical therapist helped her mom figure out ways to help her daughter, who has cerebral palsy, be as independent as possible in their playground's large sandbox area. Mom decided to stop worrying about sandy shoes and clothes and simply let Lara take full advantage of all the interesting things she loves to do there.

"In you go," mom says with a smile as she places Lara on her hands and knees in the sand. Immediately, Lara is busily crawling and scooting about, spilling the shovels, pails, and digging toys she's brought from home out of a carry-all, scooping out holes, piling and patting sand into a mountain, filling and



A visit to a duck pond is a fine context in which to walk and run after scattering ducks, imitate duck sounds, splash water with hands and feet or a long stick, throw pebbles in water, tear stale bread into crumbs to feed the ducks, gather and examine feathers, search for duck eggs, eat a picnic lunch, and much more!

dumping her pail to make sand "cakes," and sharing toys and interacting with other young children at play in the sand.

Watching the fun from a bench nearby, her mom comments, "It's great to see Lara learning to do so much, just by letting her enjoy playing in a place she loves."

Classroom Activity

Preschool teacher Paula Davis notices that a group of four children in her class are beginning to especially enjoy playing together with blocks. In response, she begins to find ways to encourage their new interest.

Paula rearranges shelves to make a larger area available for block play. She moves cars and trucks into the block area and adds a set of dollhouse figures. She also increases the length of the morning free-play period to give the block group plenty of time to build and play. The teacher watches the children's progress with the blocks and notices they're building "houses" connected by a network of block roads. She adds a set of architectural blocks to the play area so the children can use triangles, arches, columns, and other shapes on their buildings. When they say they want to build something "really big," she helps them collect large cardboard boxes, and soon they're busy building walls for a child-sized house.

Take another look!

Read or download evidence-based information by visiting our website:
www.researchtopractice.info:

Forthcoming: Dunst, C.J. (2003). Everyday natural learning opportunities and child behavior and development. *Bridges*, 2(10).

Exciting print, web-based, and multimedia materials of interest to parents and early childhood practitioners are available from the Center for Evidence-Based Practices, Orelena Hawks Puckett Institute. To order by telephone, please call 800-824-1174.



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