ENGAGING FAMILIES OF CHILDREN WITH DISABILITIES:

Systematically Planning to Create Positive Experiences and Meet Expectations

OBJECTIVES:

- Describe diverse family structures and cultures

- Explore family experiences when discovering and managing disability

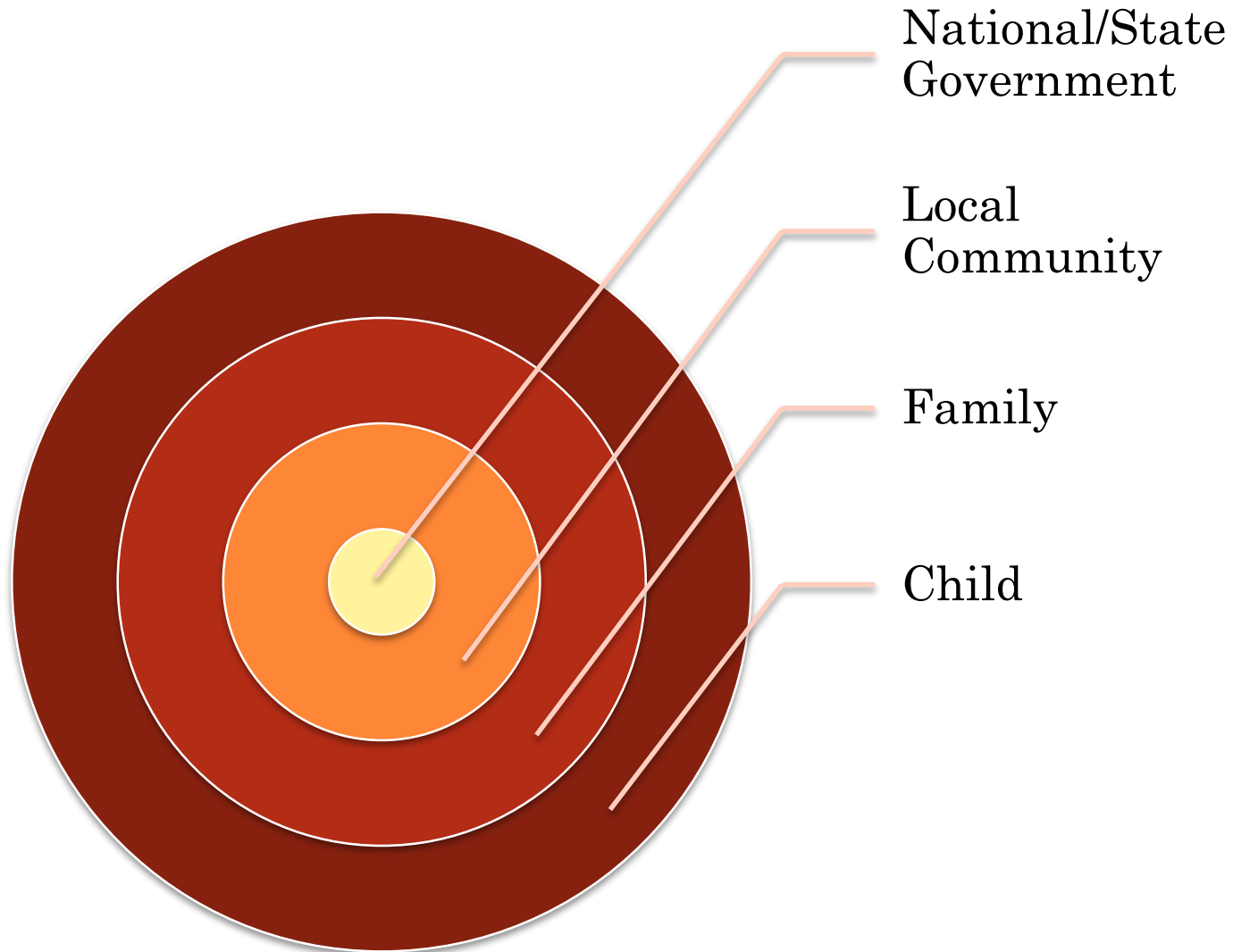- Identify strategies for supporting families of children with disabilities

POLL #1

ECOLOGICAL SYSTEMS THEORY

National/State Government

Local Community

Family

Child

THE TURNBULL'S FAMILY SYSTEMS THEORY – FAMILY CHARACTERISTICS

- Family factors: family size, cultural background, primary and secondary language, geographic location, religious affiliation

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- Family factors: family size, cultural background, primary and secondary language, geographic location, religious affiliation

- Individual factors: health, education, personality, coping styles

- Risk factors: poverty, substance abuse, domestic/community violence

THE TURNBULL'S FAMILY SYSTEMS THEORY – FAMILY INTERACTIONS

- Marital

THE TURNBULL'S FAMILY SYSTEMS THEORY – FAMILY INTERACTIONS

- Marital

- Parental

THE TURNBULL'S FAMILY SYSTEMS THEORY – FAMILY INTERACTIONS

- Marital

- Parental

- Sibling

THE TURNBULL'S FAMILY SYSTEMS THEORY – FAMILY INTERACTIONS

- Marital

- Parental

- Sibling

- Extended family relationships

THE TURNBULL'S FAMILY SYSTEMS THEORY - FAMILY FUNCTIONS

- Affection

The Turnbull's Family Systems Theory - Family Functions

- Affection
- Socialization

The Turnbull's Family Systems Theory - Family Functions

- Affection
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- Economic

THE TURNBULL'S FAMILY SYSTEMS THEORY - FAMILY FUNCTIONS

- Affection
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- Daily care

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- Spiritual

THE TURNBULL'S FAMILY SYSTEMS THEORY - FAMILY FUNCTIONS

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- Socialization
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- Self-esteem
- Spiritual
- Recreation

THE TURNBULL'S FAMILY SYSTEMS THEORY - FAMILY FUNCTIONS

- Affection
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- Daily care
- Self-esteem
- Spiritual
- Recreation
- Education

THE TURNBULL'S FAMILY SYSTEMS THEORY – FAMILY FUNCTIONING WITHIN LIFE STAGES

- Typical developmental stages
  - Birth and early childhood (0 – 8)
  - Childhood (8 – 11)
  - Adolescence (11 – 21)
  - Adulthood (21 +)

And the transitions between each

CULTURAL CONSIDERATIONS

- Definitions of "Nuclear Family"

Bruns, D. A. & Corso, R. (2001) Working with Culturally & Linguistically Diverse Families. Urbana-Champaign, IL: Clearinghouse on Early Education and Parenting (CEEP).

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Cultural Considerations

- Definitions of "Nuclear Family"

- Family leadership and decision making

- Culturally responsive communication

- Relationships with cultural community leaders

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CULTURAL CONSIDERATIONS

- Definitions of "Nuclear Family"

- Family leadership and decision making

- Culturally responsive communication

- Relationships with cultural community leaders

- Continuous reflection

Bruns, D. A. & Corso, R. (2001) Working with Culturally & Linguistically Diverse Families. Urbana-Champaign, IL: Clearinghouse on Early Education and Parenting (CEEP).

Knowing
your own **experiences**
can help you identify
how to
adapt or accommodate
for the
different experiences
of *others*

POLL #2

SELF-ASSESSMENT RESOURCE

- Promoting Cultural & Linguistic Competence: Self-Assessment Checklist for Personnel Providing Services and Supports in Early Intervention and Early Childhood Settings (from the National Center on Cultural Competence): http://nccc.georgetown.edu/documents/ChecklistEIEC.pdf

ONE FAMILIES' STORY

When you enrolled your son in the program, how did they learn about your family?

Systemic Approaches To Family Engagement – Enrollment

- How do you:
  - Welcome **all** families

Systemic Approaches To Family Engagement – Enrollment

- How do you:
  - Welcome **all** families
  - Partner with special education partners **during** enrollment

Systemic Approaches To Family Engagement – Enrollment

- How do you:
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  - Partner with special education partners **during** enrollment
  - Gather relevant information

SYSTEMIC APPROACHES TO FAMILY ENGAGEMENT – ENROLLMENT

- How do you:
  - Welcome **all** families
  - Partner with special education partners **during** enrollment
  - Gather relevant information
  - Use or implement screening and referral practices (See Watch Me Thrive: Birth to Five)

WHAT WOULD HAVE BEEN THE BEST WAY FOR PROGRAMS TO SHARE THEIR OBSERVATIONS WITH YOU?

Systemic Approaches To Family Engagement – Communication

- How do you:
  - **Maintain** positive relationships with families

Systemic Approaches To Family Engagement – Communication

- How do you:
  - **Maintain** positive relationships with families
  - **Build** positive relationships with other providers

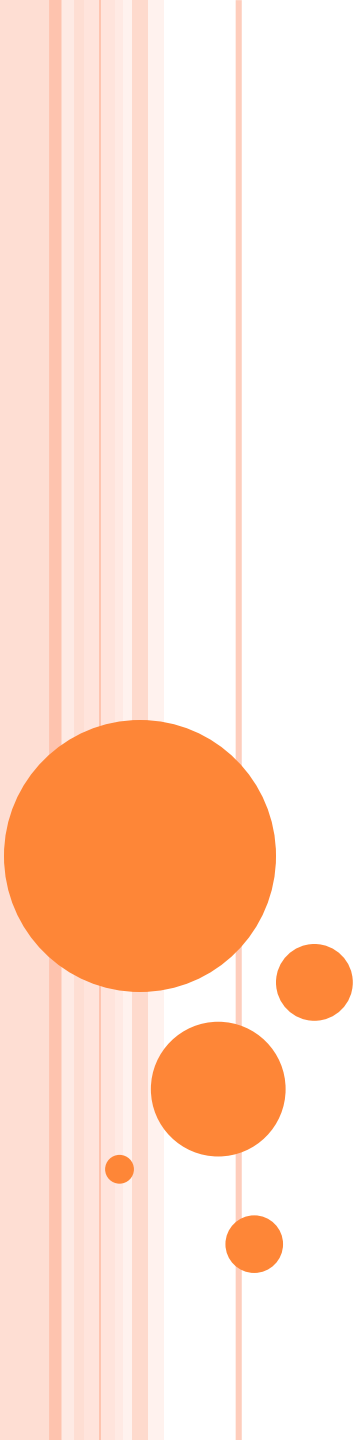# Systemic Approaches To Family Engagement – Communication

- How do you:
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  - **Build** positive relationships with other providers
  - Keep families informed

Systemic Approaches To Family Engagement – Communication

- How do you:
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  - Keep families informed
  - Stay informed of special education and related services

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- How do you:
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  - Stay informed of special education and related services
  - Share information with other providers

Systemic Approaches To Family Engagement – Communication

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  - **Build** positive relationships with other providers
  - Keep families informed
  - Stay informed of special education and related services
  - Share information with other providers
  - Stay **"on message"**

What kind of training and support do you think staff needed?

SYSTEMIC APPROACHES TO FAMILY ENGAGEMENT – HUMAN RESOURCES

- How do you:
  - Ensure staff:
    - Understand typical child development
    - Can identify developmental red flags
    - Know how to share information with families
    - Partner well with special education partners

Systemic Approaches To Family Engagement – Human Resources

- How do you:
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    - Partner well with special education partners
  - Provide ongoing support to enhance staff-family relationships

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  - Provide ongoing support to enhance staff-family relationships
  - Problem-solve challenges as they arise

ONCE THE PROGRAM SHARED THEIR CONCERNS, HOW DID THEY WORK WITH YOU TO PLAN TO SUPPORT HIS NEEDS?

Systemic Approaches To Family Engagement – Planning

- How do you:
  - Use **existing information** to plan for families of children with disabilities

SYSTEMIC APPROACHES TO FAMILY ENGAGEMENT – PLANNING

- How do you:
  - Use **existing information** to plan for families of children with disabilities
  - Make all family activities **accessible**

Systemic Approaches To Family Engagement – Planning
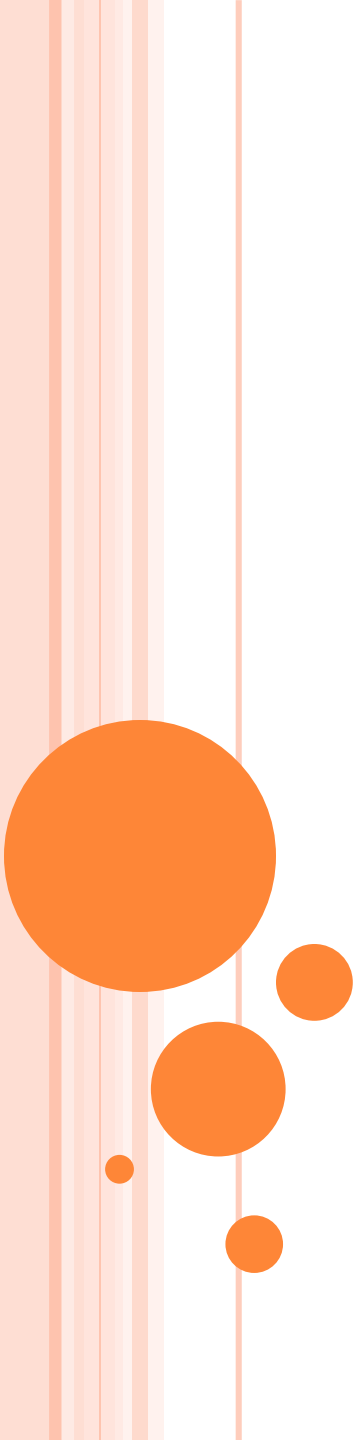
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  - **Individualize** for families of children with disabilities
  - **Collaborate** with partners to address comprehensive needs and reduce duplication

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- How do you:
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  - Make all family activities **accessible**
  - **Individualize** for families of children with disabilities
  - **Collaborate** with partners to address comprehensive needs and reduce duplication
  - Represent the **diversity** of family cultures and structures in planning

What kind of information did they collect about your son's development?
Do you know how they used it?
Did you Have access to it?

Systemic Approaches To Family Engagement – Documentation/Record-Keeping

- How do you:
  - Obtain and record parental/guardian **consent**

Systemic Approaches To Family Engagement – Documentation/Record-Keeping

- How do you:
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Systemic Approaches To Family Engagement – Documentation/Record-Keeping

- How do you:
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  - Track and maintain relevant information

SYSTEMIC APPROACHES TO FAMILY ENGAGEMENT – DOCUMENTATION/RECORD-KEEPING

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  - Protect families' **confidentiality**

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  - **Link** your information with your partners

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  - Track and maintain relevant information
  - Protect families' **confidentiality**
  - **Link** your information with your partners
  - **Provide families** with information about how you collect, track, and maintain their information

Systemic Approaches To Family Engagement – Monitoring/Program Review

- How do you:
  - Review the **level** of family engagement

Systemic Approaches To Family Engagement – Monitoring/Program Review

- How do you:
  - Review the **level** of family engagement
  - **Engage** families in evaluation/assessment

Systemic Approaches To Family Engagement – Monitoring/Program Review

- How do you:
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  - **Engage** families in evaluation/assessment
  - Determine success in meeting family's needs

SYSTEMIC APPROACHES TO FAMILY ENGAGEMENT – MONITORING/PROGRAM REVIEW

- How do you:
  - Review the **level** of family engagement
  - **Engage** families in evaluation/assessment
  - Determine success in meeting family's needs
  - **Use** monitoring or review information to make programmatic changes

OUR SON TODAY AT AGE 15

- Poor eye contact
- People confuse him
- Lacks organization

BUT...
- Best big brother
- 3.9 GPA, all honors
- Great friend
- Loving and helpful

Moving from Learning and Understanding to Planning

Gathering Information

Understanding Families' Experiences

Planning to Meet Families' Needs

SIDE NOTE:
THE BENEFITS OF FORMAL WRITTEN AGREEMENTS

- Mechanism for relationship building

- Supports organizations in blending approaches

- Streamlines planned activities

- Works out the "kinks"

Pulling Systems Together For Inclusive Environments

Enrollment

Monitoring/
Program
Review

Communication

Record-
Keeping

Human
Resources

Planning
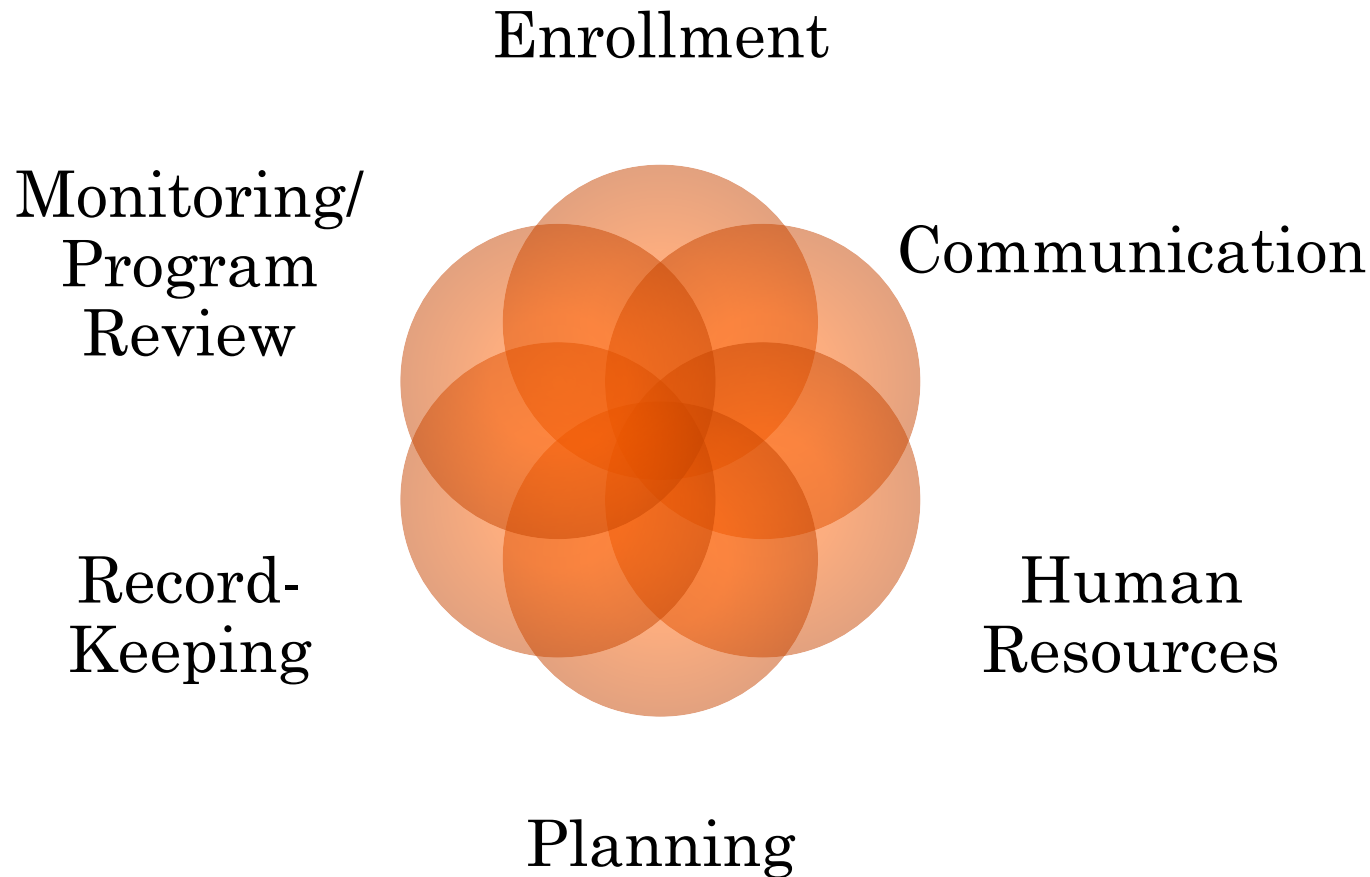
NOW WHAT?

- Ask families to get involved

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- Review existing information

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- Break things down into actionable tasks

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- Collaborate with partners and community advocates

NOW WHAT?

- Ask families to get involved

- Review existing information

- Break things down into actionable tasks

- Work step-by-step

- Collaborate with partners and community advocates

- Prioritize what matters most to your program

POLL #3

RESOURCES

- Early Childhood News Update
https://earlychildhoodnewsupdate.wordpress.com

- The Beach Center on Family and Disability
http://www.beachcenter.org/

- Center for Parent Information and Resources
http://www.parentcenterhub.org

- Harvard Family Research Center
http://www.hfrp.org

QUESTIONS

CONTACT INFORMATION

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Amanda Schwartz Consulting

a_l_schwartz@edc.org