What Educators Say and Parents Hear

Sorting Through Mixed Messages

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Session Goal

The participants will cite and apply strategies for effective communication between home and school.
Plan for the Session

• Review Examples of Communication Chaos
• Discuss Parent Involvement
• Identify Barriers to Communication
• Discuss Six Indicators of Professional Behavior
• Discuss Continuum of Collaboration and Partnership
Communication Chaos
Parent Involvement
34 CFR §300.322(a) PARENT PARTICIPATION

“Each public agency must take steps to ensure that one or both of the parents of a child with a disability are present at each IEP Team meeting or are afforded the opportunity to participate.”
Meaningful Parent Participation

Before the Meeting
- Informed of the purpose of the meeting
- Provided the opportunity to add items to the meeting agenda

During the Meeting
- Provided a clear description of present levels of academic achievement and functional performance
- Provided a clear explanation of options proposed or rejected that are based on data
Barriers to Communication

Barrier #1: CRITICIZING

“Well, you brought that on yourself.”

“Well, if your child did his homework every day, he wouldn’t be failing my class.”

“Well, if you would look on my website, you would know that I offer tutoring on Tuesdays and Thursdays.”
Barrier #2: NAME-CALLING

“Johnny is just lazy.”

“Rebecca is the class clown.”

“He is just SPECIAL.”
Barrier #3: DIAGNOSING

**Education Today** by john horse

**THEN**
The reason that Johnny is failing is because he is not applying himself... He needs more parental involvement...

**NOW**
How dare you suggest that this child is failing due to his own efforts or his lack of parental support. The reason that he is failing is because you are a bad, bad teacher who needs to be fired immediately.
Barrier #4: ORDERING

“You just need to sit him down and tell him who’s boss.”

“If you would reduce the sugar in her diet, she would be able to sit and pay attention in class.”
Barrier #5: THREATENING

“If you don’t sign the IEP, we are going to implement it anyway.”

“You can call your attorney and we’ll call ours.”
Barrier #6: MORALIZING

“You ought to apologize to her.”

“You need to be thankful that she is willing to work with your child.”
Barrier #7:
EXCESSIVE/APPROPRIATE QUESTIONING

“Did you check his backpack?”
“Did you look on the website?”
“Have you spoken with the teacher?”
“Have your spoken with the principal?”
Barrier #8: ADVISING

“If I were you, I would get him a prescription.”

“If I were you, I’d put him on a schedule so tight, he couldn’t breathe.”

“You really need to have a talk with her about her attitude.”
Barrier #9: DIVERTING

“If you think that’s bad, let me tell you what happened to me.”

“You think your child has difficulty paying attention, let me tell you about…”

“Your child is not the only student I have.”
Barrier #10:
LOGICAL ARGUMENT

“If you don’t provide structure at home, he’s not going to respond to structure at school.”

“If you allow the her to make all the choices, she will never respond to discipline.”
Barrier #11: REASSURING

“She’s a smart kid, she’ll be fine.”

“Everybody likes him, he will pass the class.”

“I know plenty of students with learning disabilities, they all survive high school.”
Activity #1

*Watch the following clip of an IEP Team meeting.*

*Were there barriers to communication?*
Reflection #1

Give examples of barriers to communication found in the video clip.

- Criticizing
- Name-Calling
- Diagnosing
- Ordering
- Threatening
- Moralizing
- Excessive/Appropriate
- Advising
- Diverting
- Logical Argument
- Questioning
- Reassuring
Six Indicators of Professional Behavior

Indicator #1: Communication
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Verbal</th>
<th>Non-Verbal</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>“No man would listen to you talk if he did not know that is was his turn next.”</td>
<td>Eyes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Edgar Watson Howe</td>
<td>Arms</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Shoulders</td>
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<td>Posture</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Attire</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Organization</td>
</tr>
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<td></td>
<td>Timeliness</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Listening

“We have two ears and one tongue so that we would listen more and talk less.”

Diogenes
Methods

Face-to-Face
Telephone
Email
Handwritten Note
Indicator #2: Commitment

“Say what you will do, and do what you say.”
Indicator #3: Equality

Each member of the team has a role. Every role is important.
Indicator #4: Skills

- Engage in ongoing professional development
- Keep current on educational trends
- Base decisions on DATA
- COLLABORATE
Indicator #5: Trust

• Takes work!
• Goes in more than one direction.
• Is gained over time.
• Is FRAGILE - Handle with Care!
Indicator #6: Respect

• Must be given!
• Has to be earned.
Activity #2

Watch the following clip of an IEP Team meeting.

Were there examples of professional behavior?
Reflection #2

Give examples of professional behavior found in the video clip.

Communication Skills
Commitment Trust
Equality Respect
Continuum of Collaboration and Partnership

Informing  
Involving  
Engaging  
Leading

Increasing degree of collaboration and partnership
Thank you!
What Educators Say and Parents Hear: *Sorting Through Mixed Messages*

Guided Notes

**Meaningful Parent Participation**

I. Before the Meeting
   a. 
   b. 

II. During the Meeting
   a. 
   b. 

**Barriers to Communication**

1. 
2. 
3.
4. 
5. 
6. 

**Six Indicators of Professional Behavior**

1. 
2. 
3. 
4. 
5. 
6. 

**Continuum of Collaboration and Partnership**