



LEARNINGbyte

EI Service Delivery

What's the Difference?



PURPOSE OF ACTIVITY

This activity illustrates the differences between traditional early intervention visits and visits that are aligned with the mission and key principles of early intervention.



RESOURCES NEEDED

- Handout – [Seven Key Principles: Looks Like/Doesn't Look Like What's the Difference?](#)
- Flip chart/whiteboard and markers (optional)



SPECIFIC STEPS

1. Begin by passing out the *Seven Key Principles: Looks Like/Doesn't Look Like* handout. Instruct participants to read the handout, then discuss which principles they think they regularly implement and which could be improved.

Option: Email this handout to participants before the meeting with instructions to read it and bring a copy to the meeting.
2. Next, instruct participants to review the handout entitled, *What's the Difference?*, which describes two types of intervention visits with the Atwater Family.
3. Instruct participants to work in small groups to answer the questions on the handout to identify:
 - a. Similarities across the two visits
 - b. Differences between the two visits
 - c. Which key principles are being implemented in each visit
4. Debrief by discussing the two visits as a large group, recording similarities and differences on the flipchart/whiteboard. Discuss which key principles are being implemented and how participants recognized the principles (e.g., what was happening on the visit that indicated a principle was in practice).
5. Facilitate discussion of the following questions:
 - Which visit represents intervention that is better aligned with the key principles of early intervention? How do you know?
 - Which visit might be more USEFUL to the family in helping them learn and use intervention strategies throughout the week? How do you know?
 - How might Rachel help the Atwater family use these strategies when they are out in the community?
 - Which visit is most typical of those in your community?

If you want to challenge your group to reflect more deeply on their own practices, consider asking the following:

- Which visit looks most like how you conduct early intervention?
- What factors might affect whether you conduct a visit like Rachel or Anna?
- Which of these factors can you adjust so that you practice early intervention more consistently like Rachel? Which key principles would you like to improve or add to your practice?



ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Topic pages:

- [Adult Learning & Early Intervention](#)
- [Coaching in Early Intervention](#)
- [Implementing Supports & Services](#)

Archived webinars:

- [Engaging Families During Visits: How to Encourage Families During Visits so that They Know What to Do Between Visits](#)
- [Tying the Knot: Engaging Families Beyond Early Intervention Visits](#)

Articles:

- [Relationship-focused intervention \(RFI\): Enhancing the role of parents in children's developmental intervention](#) (Mahoney, 2009)
- [Using Routines-Based Interventions in Early Childhood Special Education](#) (Jennings, Hanline, & Woods, 2012)

Poster/conference handout:

- [Get Up Off the Floor! – Implementing Early Intervention Where Everyday Magic Happens](#)

What's the Difference?

*The Atwater family has recently developed the IFSP for their son, Dylan. They have been receiving early intervention for several weeks, and have one main priority for their son, that he **communicates with them so that they know what he wants to eat and what he wants to play with**. Here is a description of a typical intervention visit with Dylan's family:*

Anna, the educator who provides developmental services, arrives at 10:00 a.m. every Tuesday morning as scheduled. She brings toys in a big bag and sits on the living room floor with Dylan and his mother. Anna and Dylan play with the toys from the bag, while Mrs. Atwater watches and talks with Anna about what Anna is doing with Dylan. Anna works with Dylan to elicit names of foods on the puzzle, action words such as “up” and “down” as he stacks blocks, and other food words as they look at a book. At the end of the visit, Anna suggests that Mrs. Atwater play similar games with Dylan.

Anna goes on vacation for two weeks, so Rachel substitutes for her and sees Dylan and his mother. Rachel calls Mrs. Atwater to schedule the visit, and, after talking with Mrs. Atwater about how Dylan is progressing, suggests scheduling the visit to coincide with Dylan's lunchtime. Here is a description of Rachel's visit with the family:

Rachel arrives at noon on Tuesday, ready to join the family in their lunchtime routine. She talks with Mrs. Atwater about how lunchtime usually works for them to find out what each person does, how Dylan participates (or doesn't), and what she would like for Dylan to do. As Mrs. Atwater prepares lunch for Dylan and his older brother, Rachel observes and makes suggestions to Mrs. Atwater about how to offer Dylan choices for what he might like to eat or drink. When Dylan screams for more goldfish crackers, Rachel suggests that Mrs. Atwater try to elicit the sign “cracker” from Dylan and shows her how to do this. At the end of the meal, Rachel demonstrates how to teach Dylan to follow the direction to throw his napkin away. Mrs. Atwater said that this is important to her since his older brother cleans up after himself. Finally, they end the visit with a discussion of how lunchtime went and plan for strategies Mrs. Atwater feels comfortable trying during subsequent meals over the course of the week.

1. What are some similarities between these two visits?

2. What are some differences between these two visits?

3. Which key principles are being implemented in each visit?