



Family Involvement



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DEFINITION

♥ Parents and family/caregivers' involvement as active team members alongside various service providers

♥ Entails family taking a coordinator or facilitator role in their child's health and development

This principle is one of the 10 evidence-based principles, identified in a scoping review, that can guide the organization and delivery of services for students with disabilities in integrated classrooms.

Examples

HealthyCHILD model: Working with parents as integral members of the team and as central collaborators to provide at-home services for children with developmental delays, chronic conditions or challenging behaviours (Bagnato et al., 2004)

Head Smart Trauma Start: Mentoring parents of children who experience trauma in disadvantaged areas to create a trauma-informed culture in the pre-school setting and to promote family involvement in a child's development (Holmes et al., 2015)

LEAP preschool model: Extensive skills training for family members of preschool children with autism to facilitate parents' management and involvement in their child's behaviours (Strain et al., 2011)

Transdisciplinary approach: Allowing the needs of the child and family to dictate the team's goals and having parents take case-manager roles to facilitate educational programs of students with complex disabilities (Koskie & Freeze, 2000)

Evidence & Outcome

In combination with other principles, involving families:

Improved students' attention and behaviour as rated by teachers and parents; as well as promoted positive classroom relationships as perceived by parents (Holmes et al., 2015)

Was associated with a significant improvement on measures of cognitive, language, social, and problem behavior, and autism symptoms among pre-schoolers (Strain et al., 2011)

Ongoing communication between parents and the health and school systems facilitated return to school for students following a traumatic brain injury (Gioia, 2014)

Intensive family support to parents of pre-school to third grade students is recommended to support successful transition for students in disadvantaged areas (Reynolds et al., 2009)

Application Ideas

Empowering parents through skills training and information sessions

Encouraging parents to take an active role in decision-making

Family overseeing service provision and providing feedback to teachers or other professionals working with students

Parents/caregivers taking part in team meetings to consult and discuss intervention plans with teachers and professionals