Coaching Principles and Practices:
Coaching Families

Suzanne Kucharczyk and Matt Brock

January 2013

Some content and materials adapted with permission from Rush and Shelden (2011)

Framework and content originally developed in collaboration with colleagues from the National Professional Development Center on ASD

A Preview of This Presentation

• A brief review of why coaching families is critical to optimizing child outcomes
• An overview of principles associated with coaching
• Case examples of how to apply these principles for coaching infants and toddlers in natural environments
• Resources (print and online) for more information about coaching
What Will You Need?

- Handouts (directions of how to get these here)
- A partner for role-play
- 90 minutes
- An open mind

The Coach

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=q4880PJnO2E

What We Know

“Research has shown that parent participation in intervention is key and that supporting parents in competently and confidently interacting responsively with young children during daily routines may be more critical to intervention effectiveness than the time children spend with practitioners”

(Rush and Shelden, 2011)
What We Know

• Rigorous research studies support the efficacy of parent-implemented interventions:
• [Insert screenshots of NPDC evidence base for parent-implemented interventions]

Parent training and the use of coaching to support parents has been found to be effective and feasible (NRC, 2001, Brookman-Frazee et al., 2009).

What We Do

“...early interventionists spend 51% of the home visit time directly teaching the infant and toddler; less than 1% of the time is spent in supporting parent-child interactions and coaching the parent.”

Forms of Adult Learning Support

- Consultation
- Mentoring
- Supervision
- Counseling
- Direct Training
- Coaching

Who is Coaching Whom?

Technical Assistance Providers
Coaching EI Providers
EI Providers
Coaching Families

Overview of Coaching

- Principles of coaching
- The Communicative Coach
- Diversity & Coaching
- The Coaching Process
Coaching Assumptions

• Practitioners and caregivers have good skills but can increase their skills.
• Practitioners and caregivers establish new skills or refine existing skills through reflection and self evaluation.
• Practices can change based on observation, data and feedback.
• Coaching is a cyclical and dynamic process.

10 Key Elements of Coaching in Early Childhood

1. Consistent with principles of adult learning
2. Capacity building
3. Nondirective
4. Goal oriented
5. Solution focused
6. Performance based
7. Reflective
8. Collaborative
9. Context driven
10. As hands-on as it needs to be

Individual Activity

General Coaching Skills Rating Scale

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>How would you rate your abilities to make the following observations?</th>
<th>High</th>
<th>Same</th>
<th>Low</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Learner's social skills/communications</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Learner's ability to communicate in particular skill</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Learner's current learning objectives</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Learner's comprehension in the environment</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Reflective understanding of the environment</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Ability to adapt to the learner's needs and limitations</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Availability, accessibility, and use of family and community resources</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

How would you rate your ability to do the following?

• Use direct or indirect techniques                                    | 1 2 3 4 5 |
• Establish and maintain a positive relationship with the learner     | 1 2 3 4 5 |
• Demonstrate an understanding of the learner's needs and limitations | 1 2 3 4 5 |
• Focus on the process rather than the product                        | 1 2 3 4 5 |
• Link the learner's strengths and learning to daily living           | 1 2 3 4 5 |
• Lead without passing judgment                                       | 1 2 3 4 5 |
The Communicative Coach

Potential Barriers to Communication
• Advising
• Anticipating
• Avoiding
• Cross-Examining
• Denying Others’ Reality
• Diagnosing
• Directing

• Judging
• Lecturing
• Moralizing
• Praising
• Reassuring
• Teasing

Communication Strategies for Collaboration
• The power of questions
  - Open ended
  - Reflective
• Leveling statements
• Nonverbal techniques
• Active Listening
**Small Group Activity**

**INSERT VIDEO: Mom talking about challenges**
- Direct viewers to pose questions to ask Mom.
- Follow-up w/ posing typical questions and analyzing open/closed questions and directing viewers to analyze their own list

**Open vs. Closed Questions**

**Open Question Starters**
- Tell
- How
- Describe
- What
- Why

**Closed Question Starters**
- Are
- Do
- Have
- Should
- Will
- Would
- Can

Open questions are incompatible with closed questions
Active Listening

Seek first to understand and then to be understood!

Stephen Covey

Active Listening Components

Conventions for Communication

- Nonverbal Skills
  - Attention cues
  - Response cues
  - Focus on content of verbal statements
  - Focus on the speaker’s feelings

- Social Conventions
  - Turn-taking
  - Appropriate distance
  - Encouragers

Nonverbal Skills
- Attention cues
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Social Conventions
- Turn-taking
- Appropriate distance
- Encouragers
Cultural Diversity

Cultural Continua

- Extended Family and Kinship networks -> Small unit families with little reliance on the extended families
- Interdependence -> Individuality
- Nurturance of young children -> Independence of young children
- Time is given -> Time is measured
- Respect for age, ritual, tradition -> Emphasis on youth, future, technology
- Ownership defined in broad terms -> Ownership is individual and specific
- Differentiated rights and responsibilities -> Equal rights and responsibilities
- Harmony -> Control

Your stance…

Learner | Judge
Developing Cross – Cultural Competence

- Family Structure & Child-Rearing Practices
  - Family Structure
  - Child-rearing Practices
- Family Perceptions and Attitudes
  - Perceptions of child’s disability
  - Perception of health & healing
  - Perception of help-seeking and intervention
- Language and Communication Styles

Learner Stance

- Reflect on…
  - How is the family similar or different to mine?
  - How open am I to exploring my comfort level with these similarities and differences?
  - What have I learned about myself as I examine my comfort level with situations that differ from my own culture and life experience?

Common Challenges

Every family has its own dynamics – some are universal.
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Common Challenge | One Approach
---|---
Parent agrees to co-developed plan but doesn’t not follow through | **Uphront the problem** – “Before we talk about a plan, I’d like to ask what seems to be getting in the way of putting our plans into action”.

When parent changes topics frequently | **Park it** – “I understand that this is something you want to talk about. How about we put it on our list to discuss as we plan for next week? Will that work?”

Parent insists on you telling her what to do | **Return to the Why** – Remind family that we know that their input and participation is what will help you be effective. Provide your expertise and remind them of theirs and its importance.

Another provider to the family doesn’t take a coaching perspective | **Name it** – “I understand that Sarah works differently with you. I have found this approach to be effective in my work with families. In what ways are the different approaches a concern to you?”

If in doubt…

*Choose relationship over control*

The Coaching Process
The Coaching Process

- Pre-observation Initiation
  - Post-observation Reflection & Feedback
  - Observation & Action
  - The Family

The Family

- Understanding the family context - resources
  - Asset – Based Context (ABC) Matrix
  - Interest – Based Everyday Activity Checklist
  - Parent Implemented Intervention Brief
    - Additional Resources
- Understanding family needs and priorities
  - Aligning interventions with IFSP outcomes

Case Study

Meet Joey

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Coaching Processes

• Initiation (Pre-observation)
  ▪ Joint Planning
• Observation & Action
  ▪ Observation
  ▪ Action
• Reflection & Evaluation (Post-observation)
  ▪ Reflection
  ▪ Feedback
  ▪ Joint Planning

Purpose of Initiation

• Joint Planning
  ▪ Review what has happened
  ▪ Discuss current situation
  ▪ Create plan for support

Initiation

Coach focuses on parent’s goals by helping

• Specify relationship and parent’s priorities
• Clarify child’s and/or parents abilities and desired outcomes
• Pair developmental outcomes to particular intervention strategies
• Determine evidence for child’s and parent’s progress

Examples of questions to ask

• What would help you?
• What supports would be helpful for you/your child?
• What have you thought about doing (or tried)?
• What will show to you that your child is learning?
Joey’s Priority Goal

During family dinners, Joey will sit at the dining room table either eating or quietly playing with a toy for at least 10 min for 2/3 dinners.

Purpose of Observation

• Examining inviting partner’s current actions with the aim of developing new skills, strategies or ideas
• Opportunity to teach and practice in safe, learning environment
• Opportunity to promote reflection and provide feedback

Observation & Action

Coach gathers data by soliciting information about
• Child development and behavior
• Parent’s interactions, strategies, and decisions

Coach may use
• First-hand observation, audiotapes, videotapes, and progress reports
• Storytelling, dialogue and interviews, inventories
• Instruction, demonstration, guided practice, modeling
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Modeling

Spontaneous and Planned

1. Joint discussion of what will be modeled and why
2. Give parent something specific to observe or do
3. Model while parent observes
4. Debrief what worked, what didn’t, what coach could have done differently, and what parent might want to try
5. Parent tries to implement if comfortable
6. Parent and coach reflect on the activity
7. Develop a plan for how the strategy or activity will happen when the coach is not present

A Role Play Opportunity

Suzanne Kucharczyk and Matt Brock
Activity Timeline

- Read Activity
- Decide on Roles
  - Coach
  - Parent
  - Joey/observer
- Coach & Observer determine reflective questions and Coach asks parent (10-15min)
- Coach plans for modeling (5min)
- Planned Modeling Process (5-10min)

Purpose of Reflection/Evaluation (Postobservation)

- Reflection
  - Parent’s review and analysis
  - Coach builds capacity by promoting ongoing self-assessment, planning and acquisition of new knowledge and behavior
- Feedback
  - Informative
  - Affirmative
  - Evaluative – awareness of use
  - Directive – to be used infrequently
- Joint Planning

Reflection

Coach enhances learner’s perception and actions by helping

- Summarize impressions of actions/events
- Compare planned-for and obtained results
- Analyze relationships between child behavior and parent decisions/behavior
- Apply new information and reflect on coaching process

Questions to ask

- What happened when you…?
- What did you do to influence what happened? How is this different?
- What changes would you make, if any, the next time?
- What have you learned from this process?
Evaluation

Coach reviews the effectiveness of the coaching sessions, either alone or with the IP to

- Review the strengths and weaknesses of the coaching session
- Analyze the effectiveness of the coaching relationship
- Determine whether progress is being made to achieve intended outcomes, resulting in continuation or resolution of the coaching process

Questions to ask

- Do I need to make any changes in the coaching process?
- Am I assisting the learner to achieve the intended outcomes?
- Should I continue as the coach, or will another team member have the specialized experience/skills needed at this time?

Critiquing Coaching Techniques

Observe for the following:

- Reflects partner’s words
- Uses open questions
- Clarifies words and feelings
- Takes turns; no interrupting
- Checks for understanding
- Uses verbal and nonverbal encouragement

How might you handle the conversation differently if you were the coach?
Coaching Log: Documenting Change
Remember

• Coaching is a mutual conversation based on specific, mutually-agreed-on outcomes
• Coaching is a reciprocal process between the coach and inviting partner
• Coaching relationships can be developed with families, child caregivers, and early childhood practitioners
• Every conversation is a potential opportunity for coaching
• Coaching may be planned or occur spontaneously
• Reflection is the most important component
Resources

Online Resources
(include tools used in this presentation)

• NPDC on ASD Coaching Resources
  • http://autismpdc.fpg.unc.edu/coaching-resources

• Fippcase
  • http://www.fippcase.org/index.php

• Rush and Shelden
  • http://www.coachinginearlychildhood.org/index.php

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