**Learning Guide 5.3 Family –**

**Gathering the Information**

## Objectives

## Identify the challenges practitioners face when working with families to promote family-centeredness, family capacity building, and encourage positive parent-professional relationships.

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| Related Content:[Module 5, lesson 2 – Gathering information](https://rpm.fpg.unc.edu/module-5-family-plan/lesson-2-gathering-information)  Instructional Method: Structured exercise  Level: Intermediate/Advanced  Estimated Time Needed: 5 min. instructor preparation; 25 min. learner activity  Learner Form: None |

## Description

## Learners will review family profiles and, with a small group, identify the family’s circumstances, brainstorm ways to involve the family members in decision-making, and identify strategies that will build relationships and increase competence and confidence for the family.

## Materials/Resources

* Learning Guide 5.3 Family Profiles
* Learning Guide 5.3 Activity Handout

## Facilitator Instructions

1. Divide learners into groups of three or four. Assign each group one family profile and provide copies of the profile to each member of the group. Provide one copy of Learning Guide 5.3 Activity per group.
2. Allow groups time to review family profiles and brainstorm strategies to support family-centered practices, family capacity-building, and family-professional partnerships.
3. Have each group share information about their family and at least one strategy that reflects the DEC Recommended Practices for Families.
4. Provide feedback.

## Suggested Assessment

Performance Indicator: Learners will identify the unique circumstances, strengths, and competencies of families and provide families with unbiased information and involved them in decision-making.

(See Sample Answers provided for Learning Guide 5.3 Activity)

| **If the learner…** | **Then provide feedback…** |
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| Does not identify family’s unique circumstances | Revisit the family profile and reflect on the unique details of the family experience. |
| Does not provide families with unbiased information and involve family’s in decision-making | Have the learner reflect on their strategies and the possible reception by family members. |
| Does not use strategies that build relationships with families and does not include participatory opportunities for caregivers that build on their parenting strengths and increase their competence and confidence. | Remind the learner that the family is the most important figure in the shaping of outcomes for children with disabilities and it is essential to increase their competence and confidence in delivering practices and strategies that will positively impact the child’s life. Have the learner revisit the content in Module 5, Lesson 2. |

## Distance Learning Tips

* This activity can be done individually.
* Provide prompt feedback.

**Learning Guide 5.3 Activity Handout**

Name(s):

Date:

Directions: With a small group, review the family profile and complete the questions below.

1. Identify the family’s unique circumstances including ethnicity, culture, family structure, and family goals.

2. As a group discuss the given themes related to the recommended practices for work with families and how they would relate to the unique family described in the family profile. Brainstorm strategies to use with the family that would improve family-centeredness, capacity building, and collaboration.

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| Family Name:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ |

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| **Themes** | **Family Characteristics** | | **Strategies** |
| ***Family-centered practices:***Practices that treat families with dignity and respect; are individualized, flexible, and responsive to each family’s unique circumstances; provide family members complete and unbiased information to make informed decisions; and involve family members in acting on choices to strengthen child, parent, and family functioning. |  | |  |
| ***Family capacity-building practices:***Practices that include the participatory opportunities and experiences afforded to families to strengthen existing parenting knowledge and skills and promote the development of new parenting abilities that enhance parenting self-efficacy beliefs and practices. |  | |  |
| ***Family and professional collaboration:***Practices that build relationships between families and professionals who work together to achieve mutually agreed upon outcomes and goals that promote family competencies and support the development of the child. |  | |  |
| **Learning Guide 5.3 - Family Profiles**  Directions: Copy the family profiles so each member of the group has one copy of the same family profile. Cut along the dotted lines. TIP: Print on heavier paper and laminate for repeated use. | | | |
| **The Rodriguez Family**  *Mr. and Mrs. Rodriguez immigrated to the United States about five years ago with their son Manuel (who was one year old at the time) from Honduras. They live in a close-knit community with many other family members including aunts, uncles, cousins, and siblings. Mr. Rodriguez works for his cousin’s house-building business. Mrs. Rodriguez was a nurse in Honduras and attends classes towards updating her credentials to work in the United States. They have three children, Manuel (6), Rosie (4), and Jacobo (3). Rosie and Jacobo attend the local Head Start center. Jacobo has been diagnosed with a speech and language impairment. Mr. and Mrs. Rodriguez are worried about Jacobo being able to communicate in Spanish with his family and friends but also becoming proficient in English to be successful in the United States. They know the importance of reading and go to the library weekly to get new books to read with Jacobo and their other children. The family also likes to sing songs together.* | | **The Bell-Dreadon Family**  *Ms. Bell and Mr. Dreadon are young black professionals and the parents to Antoine, a four-year-old boy with autism. The parents, who are divorced but friendly with one another, have joint custody of Antoine and live in the same suburban community. Ms. Bell works as a paralegal and Mr. Dreadon works in IT in a local business office. Antoine is their only child and his special needs are often a source of stress for his parents. They do not have a lot of family to rely on but Ms. Bell’s mother lives close by and often cares for Antoine. Ms. Bell also attends a local Baptist church with Antoine (when it’s her weekend with him) and has many friends there to support her. Mr. Dreadon is interested in sports and likes to spend time with Antoine outside when possible throwing or kicking balls. During these activities, Mr. Dreadon praises Antoine enthusiastically. Their goals for Antoine are for him to engage in more cooperative play with peers and with his parents.* | |
| **The Wang Family**  *Mr. and Mrs. Wang are Chinese-American parents to a two-year-old daughter, Amy, who has developmental delays affecting her mobility and fine motor control. Mr. Wang is getting a graduate degree in public policy and Mrs. Wang stays home with Amy but has a degree in pharmacology. Both Mr. Wang and Mrs. Wang live far from family while Mr. Wang is in school but they plan to return home when he is finished. Currently, they have a close-knit group of friends through the university and attend a local Chinese-American church. The Wangs blend many Chinese and American cultural traditions into their daily lives (i.e. the kinds of food they make, language, daily routines). Currently, their goals for Amy are for her to be able to join the neighborhood children in outdoor/gross motor play and to increase her dexterity in using chopsticks and other utensils during meals.* | | **The Miller-Freedman Family**  *Ms. Miller and Ms. Freedman are married women and have recently adopted their seven-month-old daughter, Grace, who was born at a low birth weight and seven weeks early. Both Ms. Miller and Ms. Freedman work full-time and they have hired a nanny, Rebecca, along with Mrs. Freedman’s mother, Chelsea, to help share the care of Grace. Mrs. Miller and Mrs. Freedman have many friends and family members in the area and feel well supported by their community in the care and rearing of Grace. However, they worry about outsider perceptions of their family as they live in a fairly conservative region. They like to stay active in the community and spend their free-time going to farmers’ markets, playing outside at parks, and gardening. Right now their goals and hopes for Grace include developing her strength during tummy time activities, encouraging Grace to start trying new solid foods, and increasing her opportunities for reciprocal play with the adults caring for her.* | |

**Learning Guide 5.3 Activity Handout – Sample Answers (Rodriguez Family)**

Name(s):

Date:

Directions: With a small group, review the family profile and complete the questions below.

1. Identify the family’s unique circumstances including ethnicity, culture, family structure, and family goals.

2. As a group discuss the given themes related to the recommended practices for work with families and how they would relate to the unique family described in the family profile. Brainstorm strategies to use with the family that would improve family-centeredness, capacity building, and collaboration.

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| Family Name: The Rodriguez Family  The Rodriguez family is comprised of a mother, father, and three children. The mother, father, and oldest child are immigrants from Honduras and the two younger children were born in the United States. They come from a large family and live close to many extended family members. Their goal for their youngest child, Jacobo, is to maintain his dual language status while also improving his language more globally. |

| **Themes** | **Family Characteristics** | **Strategies** |
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| ***Family-centered practices:***Practices that treat families with dignity and respect; are individualized, flexible, and responsive to each family’s unique circumstances; provide family members complete and unbiased information to make informed decisions; and involve family members in acting on choices to strengthen child, parent, and family functioning. | Rodriguez family members are immigrants and/or first-generation Americans.  Rodriguez’s have large extended family | Provide services to Jacobo within his natural environment and include his parents, siblings, and other extended family as much as possible. |
| ***Family capacity-building practices:***Practices that include the participatory opportunities and experiences afforded to families to strengthen existing parenting knowledge and skills and promote the development of new parenting abilities that enhance parenting self-efficacy beliefs and practices. | Rodriguez family speaks two languages  Rodriguez parents have diverse skills (medicine, construction, etc.)  Rodriguez family already works to enhance language through books and songs. | Provide services to Jacobo in both English and Spanish and include activities that Jacobo performs with his family everyday (i.e. songs that emphasize specific language goals and books that are dual language).  Encourage Jacobo’s family to continue to share books and song with him during their everyday activities |
| ***Family and professional collaboration:***Practices that build relationships between families and professionals who work together to achieve mutually agreed upon outcomes and goals that promote family competencies and support the development of the child. | Rodriguez family wants to maintain Jacobo’s dual language status. | Ensure all documents and resources are provided to the family in both Spanish and English to support dual language status.  Connect the family with agencies that have staff who see dual language as a priority. |

**Learning Guide 5.3 Activity Handout – Sample Answers (Bell-Dreadon Family)**

Name(s):

Date:

Directions: With a small group, review the family profile and complete the questions below.

1. Identify the family’s unique circumstances including ethnicity, culture, family structure, and family goals.

2. As a group discuss the given themes related to the recommended practices for work with families and how they would relate to the unique family described in the family profile. Brainstorm strategies to use with the family that would improve family-centeredness, capacity building, and collaboration.

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| Family Name: Bell-Dreadon Family  The Bell-Dreadon family is an African-American family of three: father, mother, and four-year-old son with autism. The mother and father are separated or divorced and share custody of Antoine. The maternal grandmother is another caretaker of Antoine. The mother and Antoine attend a church and have a strong community there. The father and Antoine spend time together playing sports. Both parents want Antoine to increase his competency in social relations. |

| **Themes** | **Family Characteristics** | **Strategies** |
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| ***Family-centered practices:***Practices that treat families with dignity and respect; are individualized, flexible, and responsive to each family’s unique circumstances; provide family members complete and unbiased information to make informed decisions; and involve family members in acting on choices to strengthen child, parent, and family functioning. | The family is African-American and has few familial resources but the parents live in the same community. The parents are friendly with each other. The mother has social resources with a local church. The grandmother is also available for support. | Provide services in both parent’s homes, alternating location. Find out specific social interactions the parents would like to work on with Antoine.  Include the grandmother in conversations about strategies.  Ask Antoine’s mother what church activities will provide Antoine with the opportunity for social interaction. |
| ***Family capacity-building practices:***Practices that include the participatory opportunities and experiences afforded to families to strengthen existing parenting knowledge and skills and promote the development of new parenting abilities that enhance parenting self-efficacy beliefs and practices. | Mr. Dreadon likes to spend time outdoors with Antoine playing sports. He demonstrates positive parenting by praising Antoine during these times.  Ms. Bell has a strong church community. She includes Antoine in activities with peers there. | Demonstrate strategies that will work on building Antoine’s social skills in the context of playing sports or within typical routines at the church.  Encourage Antoine’s parents to engage in conversation with him during their joint activities. Point out that you have seen them provide Antoine with a lot of praise. Remind them how beneficial it is when they provide Antoine with specific praise when they see examples of positive social skills. |
| ***Family and professional collaboration:***Practices that build relationships between families and professionals who work together to achieve mutually agreed upon outcomes and goals that promote family competencies and support the development of the child. | The family wants Antoine to increase his social relationships with peers. | When writing Antoine’s goals and objectives, be sure to include specific outcomes related to peer relations and conversations.  Advocate for Antoine by encouraging the parents to find out about local pre-kindergarten programs. |

**Learning Guide 5.3 Activity Handout – Sample Answers (Wang Family)**

Name(s):

Date:

Directions: With a small group, review the family profile and complete the questions below.

1. Identify the family’s unique circumstances including ethnicity, culture, family structure, and family goals.

2. As a group discuss the given themes related to the recommended practices for work with families and how they would relate to the unique family described in the family profile. Brainstorm strategies to use with the family that would improve family-centeredness, capacity building, and collaboration.

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| Family Name: Wang Family  The Wang family is Chinese-American and they have a two-year-old daughter, Amy, with delays in gross and fine motor skills. They are currently separated from most of their family members while the father is in medical school. However, they have a close-knit community of friends through the university and a local church. The Wang family has both American and Chinese cultural traditions. One of their goals for Amy is to increase her competency in use of utensils during meal times. |

| **Themes** | **Family Characteristics** | **Strategies** |
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| ***Family-centered practices:***Practices that treat families with dignity and respect; are individualized, flexible, and responsive to each family’s unique circumstances; provide family members complete and unbiased information to make informed decisions; and involve family members in acting on choices to strengthen child, parent, and family functioning. | The Wang family is Chinese-American and they adopt a mixture of American and Chinese cultural traditions. | Spend time learning more about the family traditions and use these to strengthen the activities and strategies you use with the family. What family traditions include meals? How can practice with utensils be worked in to those traditions? |
| ***Family capacity-building practices:***Practices that include the participatory opportunities and experiences afforded to families to strengthen existing parenting knowledge and skills and promote the development of new parenting abilities that enhance parenting self-efficacy beliefs and practices. | Amy’s parents love to cook and often have Amy participate in cooking activities, which she enjoys. After they cook meals together they eat together as a family and talk about what they have made. | When Amy is eating she often hands the utensils to her parents so they will feed her. Recommend that her parents encourage Amy to use the utensils herself. If she hands them to her parents, they can use hand over hand to encourage her to use them with some support. |
| ***Family and professional collaboration:***Practices that build relationships between families and professionals who work together to achieve mutually agreed upon outcomes and goals that promote family competencies and support the development of the child. | The Wang family wants to increase Amy’s competency in her use of utensils during meal times. | Schedule visits during mealtimes to support the adoption of strategies and supports to encourage greater usage of utensils.  Suggest other professionals that might be helpful if they feel that she needs more intervention. |

**Learning Guide 5.3 Activity Handout – Sample Answers (Miller-Freedman Family)**

Name(s):

Date:

Directions: With a small group, review the family profile and complete the questions below.

1. Identify the family’s unique circumstances including ethnicity, culture, family structure, and family goals.

2. As a group discuss the given themes related to the recommended practices for work with families and how they would relate to the unique family described in the family profile. Brainstorm strategies to use with the family that would improve family-centeredness, capacity building, and collaboration.

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| Family Name: Miller-Freedman Family  The Miller-Freedman family is a same-sex female couple that recently adopted an infant, Grace, who was born seven weeks early with a low birth weight. They have support for the care of Grace from a grandparent and a nanny. Although they worry about external opinion regarding their family structure, they have many social resources through family and friends and are active in the community (i.e., farmers’ markets, planning community events, volunteering in the library). Their goals for Grace are to increase her strength and increase opportunities for reciprocal communications. |

| **Themes** | **Family Characteristics** | **Strategies** |
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| ***Family-centered practices:***Practices that treat families with dignity and respect; are individualized, flexible, and responsive to each family’s unique circumstances; provide family members complete and unbiased information to make informed decisions; and involve family members in acting on choices to strengthen child, parent, and family functioning. | The Miller-Freedman family is a same-sex female couple that has adopted a baby girl. | Approach the family with understanding and respect regarding their unique circumstances. |
| ***Family capacity-building practices:***Practices that include the participatory opportunities and experiences afforded to families to strengthen existing parenting knowledge and skills and promote the development of new parenting abilities that enhance parenting self-efficacy beliefs and practices. | The family is well resourced through family and friends. They like to spend time outdoors and in the community. | Find ways for the family to include Grace in their daily routine that will increase communication (i.e., carry Grace in a carrier closer to eye level during community outings). |
| ***Family and professional collaboration:***Practices that build relationships between families and professionals who work together to achieve mutually agreed upon outcomes and goals that promote family competencies and support the development of the child. | The family’s goals for Amy are to increase her strength and increase opportunities for reciprocal communication. | Have the family describe their daily routines and activities and find natural openings to increase opportunities for tummy time. Encourage the family to look for activities within their community for mothers and infants |