



How to Talk with Families about Developmental Concerns

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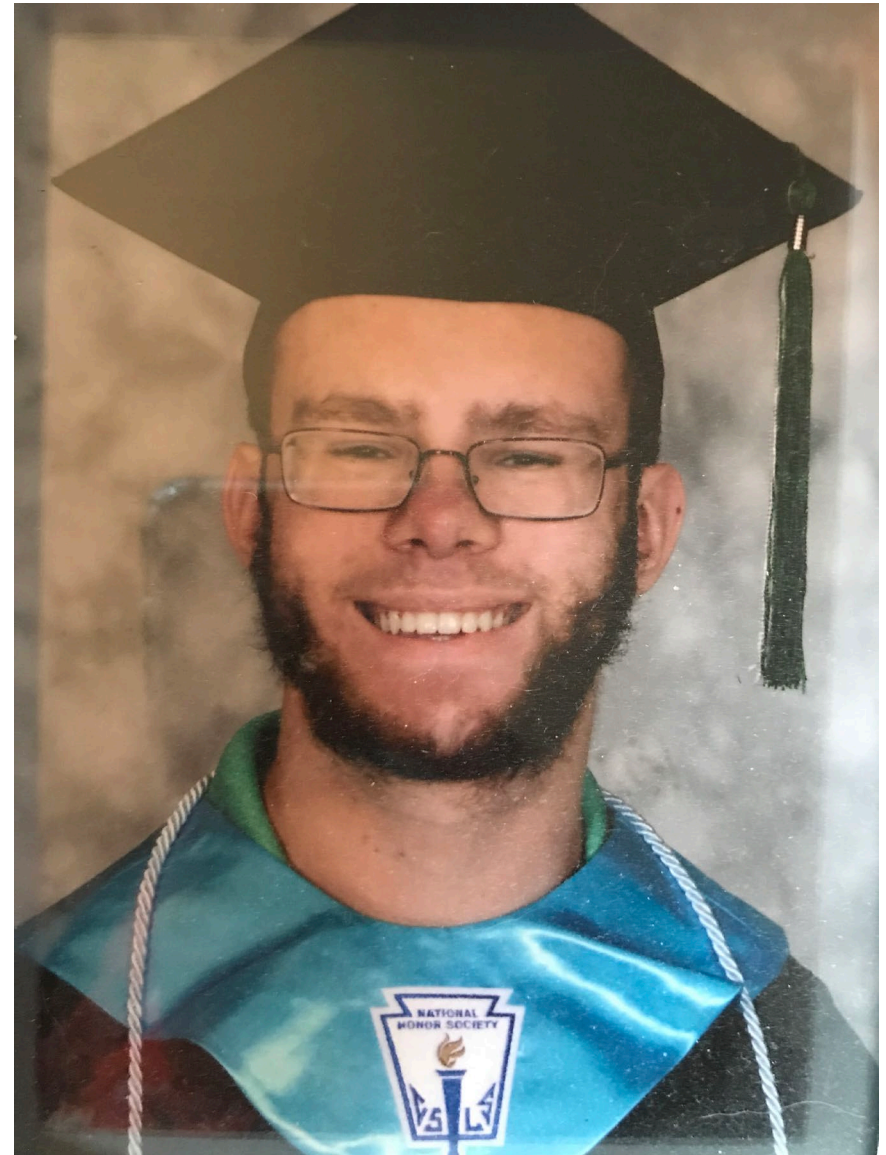
Part of IU's
Indiana Institute
on Disability and
Community

One of 7 centers

Cover the lifespan

Research and
Training





Session Objectives

1. Understand the value of preparation and be able to share specific ways that you can “set the stage” for talking with families about concerns
2. Understand the term self-regulation and how your regulation will impact conversations with families
3. Be able to identify and share a few specific strategies to use during and after conversations



Preparation

Talk about development regularly

- Not just when there is a concern
- Share CDC's Milestone Tracker app and or CDC checklists with families so conversations can build on data
- Listen when families talk



<https://www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/actearly/milestones-app.html>



Talk about ANYTHING regularly



How are you building relational trust?



Compassion

Competence

Consistency

Communication



Think about the environment...

How does our program look to someone from the outside?

Are there welcoming signs/bulletin boards? Is diversity represented?

Are there signs telling families where to go?

Is everyone called by name?



Are there name tags at events to help everyone use names?

Is there a place for family members to put their personal belongings? A place for them to sit?

Who greets guests? Does everyone in the building give a warm greeting?

Is children's work displayed in the classrooms? In the hallways?



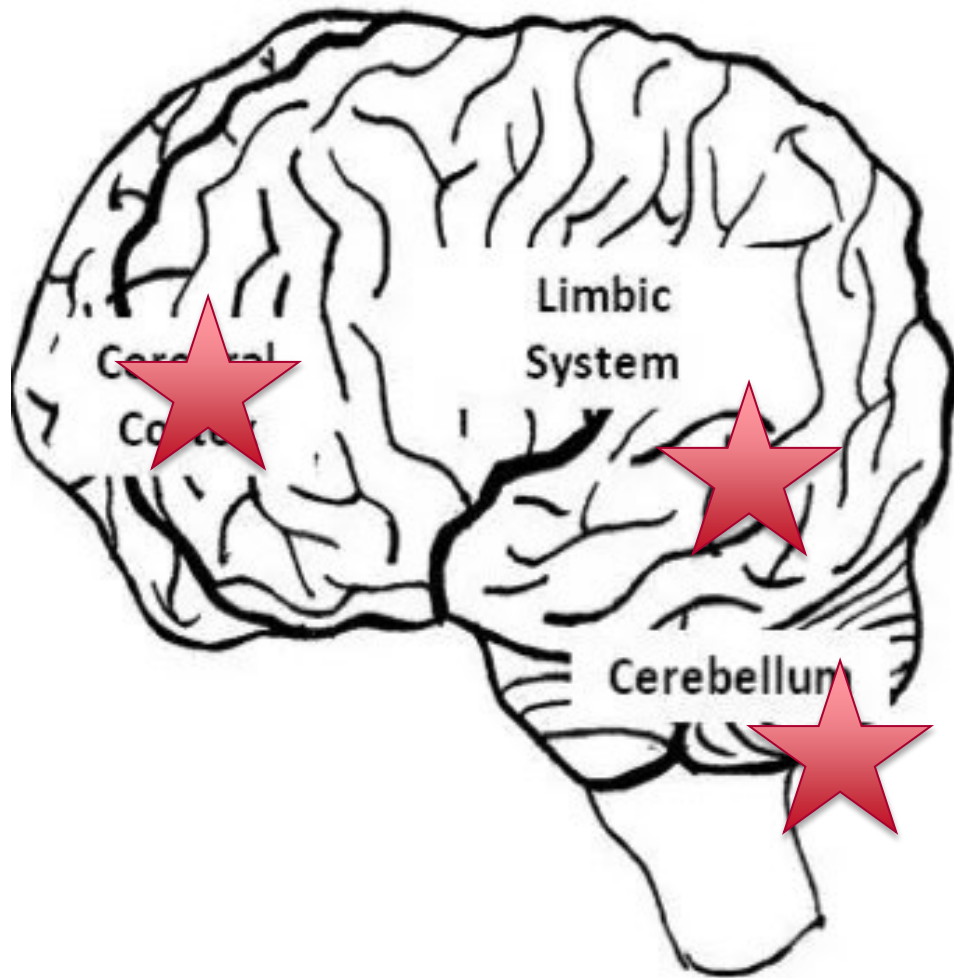
Communicate...the Good Stuff



When you have concerns: **BEFORE**

- Choose your time and place
- Arrange for interpretation if needed
- Make sure YOU are regulated





Cerebellum – the “motor control” part of our brains: *breathing, heartbeat and motor skills*

Limbic System – the “reactionary” part of our brains: *emotions, fight-or-flight, pleasure/reward and pain*

Cerebral Cortex – the “thinking” part of our brains: *reasoning, judgment, motivation, perception, memory and learning*

Self-Regulation requires access to the “top” of the brain



Did you know you can get the Calm app for free?

<https://indianaspark.com/calm/>





During the Conversation:

- Highlight child's strengths
- Share what you have observed-do it in clear, descriptive way-share data
- Ask family members to share what they have noticed at home
 - Open-ended
 - "Tell me more", "Why do you think...?"
- It is not your role to diagnose. Avoid using labels, focus on specifics.
- Encourage the family to share concerns with pediatrician, if appropriate. Offer to help with referrals, when desired



First Steps (children 0-3rd birthday)

- Anyone can refer
- Completely optional
- Services provided in “natural environment”
- Can support behavior concerns
- Physician does have to sign for services to begin



How should First Steps look in a childcare setting?



Recognition of family differences

1. Who needs to be at the table?
2. Cultural/family views of disability
3. Cultural/family views on teachers as experts
4. Varying family capacity



If family member is upset

- Don't take it personally
- Keep taking stock of how you are feeling—are you still regulated?
- Remember that they want what is best for their family
- Re-group and consider the long game



After the conversation:

1. Document
2. Families may need to process---plan to have multiple conversations
3. Support family REGARDLESS of choice
4. If you offered resources, follow-up



Resources

- <https://www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/actearly/milestones/index.html> (CDC Milestones website)
- https://www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/actearly/pdf/parents_pdfs/milestonemomentseng508.pdf (CDC Milestones Tracker app)
- <https://www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/watchmetraining/module4.html>
- https://www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/actearly/pdf/parents_pdfs/tipstalkingparents.pdf
- <https://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/publication/talking-families-about-their-childrens-development>
- <https://www.ndkids.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/06/OnOurMindsWeb0110.pdf>
- <https://first5.gov.ie/userfiles/files/download/aff35e28bcdeb586.pdf>

Today's PowerPoint: <https://go.iu.edu/4NQL>



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