Putting the DEC Recommended Practices to Work in Parent Centers:

Part One

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Learning Objectives

Part 1
• Participants will
  • become familiar with the Division for Early Childhood (DEC)
  • become familiar with the DEC Recommended Practices (RPs)
  • be introduced to the ECTA Center’s Suite of Resources that support family and professional use of RPs

Part 2
• Participants will understand how to use the resources in their daily work to support families.
What Is DEC?

- The Division for Early Childhood (DEC) of the Council for Exceptional Children (CEC) is an international membership organization for those who work with or on behalf of young children (0-8) with disabilities and other special needs and their families.
What Does DEC do for Families?

- DEC promotes policies and practices that support families and enhance the optimal development of young children (0-8) who have or are at risk for developmental delays and disabilities.

- DEC provides guidance on EI/ECSE practices related to better outcomes for young children with disabilities and/or delays, their families, and the professionals who serve them.
What are the DEC Recommended Practices (RPs)?

- A DEC initiative that bridges the gap between research and practice, offering guidance to parents and professionals who work with young children who have or are at risk for developmental delays or disabilities.

- The primary goal of the Recommended Practices (RPs) is to inform and improve the quality of services provided to young children with or at risk of disabilities or delays and their families.

- Practices represent the “essential”, “biggest bang” or highest leverage/impact
There are 66 Recommended Practices organized in 8 topic areas.

- Leadership (14)
- Assessment (11)
- Environment (6)
- Family (10)
- Instruction (13)
- Interaction (5)
- Teaming and Collaboration (5)
- Transition (2)
Role of DEC aRPy Ambassador
What DEC aRPy Ambassadors Do

- **Bring awareness** to the existence of the DEC Recommended Practices and share information about the materials and products that support the implementation of the practices.

- **Collaborate** with local, regional and state entities to **promote awareness and use** of the DEC Recommended Practices to **improve systems, services, and outcomes** for young children with or at risk for disabilities and their families.
Find an Ambassador

aRPy Ambassador Program
Getting Started with the RPs

- The Early Childhood Technical Assistance Center (ECTA) has developed a suite of free resources available to support practitioners, families, and professional development providers in the use of the DEC Recommended Practices.

- Key TA products include:
  - Performance Checklists for practitioners
  - Practice Guides for practitioners
  - Practice Guides for families
Tools to Help You Use the RPs
Helping Families Be Full Team Members

Description of the Practice

Supporting Families in Active, Meaningful Participation
- Schedule interactions that involve a particular child/family at times and places convenient to the family. This will help the family be more relaxed and willing to participate fully.
- Clearly communicate and demonstrate that family members’ input is valued and a vital part of all assessment, planning, and intervention processes. This is accomplished by asking for family ideas and soliciting their opinions from the very beginning of the assessment process. This helps families recognize their contributions to child growth and learning.
- Providing family members with clear, understandable, and jargon-free information about the purpose of each and every interaction helps them to prepare for and participate in the assessment and intervention processes.

Video example of the Practice

A Quick Peek
"Is this Mrs. Searls? Hello. My name is Abby Lewis. I’m a teacher with the Early On early intervention program. I understand you called yesterday with some questions and concerns about your son Hal. Is this correct? (Pause). Is this a good time to talk to me a little more about those concerns and for us to discuss possible next steps? (Yes). Great. Can you tell me a little bit more about your concerns? (Yes…). Am I hearing you correctly that you are worried about his talking and reading? (Yes)… If you would like, let’s set up a time that I can come to your home for about an hour to see Hal play with some of the things he enjoys and, possibly, for you to show me some of the things that you are concerned about. I can share more information about Early On and what we do. This will also be a time for you to ask questions and for us to talk about Hal and your family that will help us better understand what might be going on right now. (Pause) You are welcome to pick a time and place that works best for you and Hal. What is a good time during the day for you and Hal? Please feel free to invite anyone else you would like for us to meet with. I’m going to put in the mail today a little more information about the program and what evaluation assessment process is all about. See you next week!"
More Tools to Help You Use the RPs

Mobile Access for Practice Guides
Got Challenges, or Dilemmas?
There’s a Recommended Practice for that!

Wondering how these resources support the work of Parent Centers?
Be sure to watch Part 2.
Resource List

- DEC Recommended Practices (RPs) [https://www.dec-sped.org/dec-recommended-practices](https://www.dec-sped.org/dec-recommended-practices)
- DEC aRPy Ambassadors [https://ectacenter.org/decrp/arpy_ambassadors.asp](https://ectacenter.org/decrp/arpy_ambassadors.asp)
- Practice Improvement Tools [http://ectacenter.org/decrp/](http://ectacenter.org/decrp/)
- Practice Guides for Families (English) [http://ectacenter.org/decrp/type-pgfamily.asp](http://ectacenter.org/decrp/type-pgfamily.asp)
- Practice Guides for Families (Spanish) [http://ectacenter.org/decrp/type-pgfamily-sp.asp](http://ectacenter.org/decrp/type-pgfamily-sp.asp)
Thank you!

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