Evidence-Based Practice Coaching

Training Companion Guide

Module 1: Preparing to Be a Coach

Requirements met to be a coach for a person holding a 1-year DS certification

- Hold a valid 5 or 10-year DS/EI Supervisor certification.
- Completed Evidence-Based Practice Coaching Training (DODD MyLearning) and able to commit to the full year of coaching a new DS.

Evidence-based practice coaching is:

- A formal relationship between a 5-year certified DS and a 1-year certified DS that is designed to foster growth and reflection, increase confidence and competence of the 1-year DS in their professional role, and provide ongoing support for the 1-year DS.

The goal of EBP coaching is to improve the quality of service provision for children and families receiving Early Intervention. EBP coaching is a unique role that involves aspects of peer mentoring, reflective practice, provision of evidence-based information, and strong use of leadership skills to provide support for new Ohio 1-year Developmental Specialists.

Module 2: Preparing to Be a Good Coach

<u>Defining the Role of the Coach</u>

- Mentor, but not a supervisor.
- Sounding board and confidant, but not a counselor.
- Resource and promotes reflection and self-sufficiency.
- Maintaining, modeling, and encouraging professionalism.
- Understanding and practicing confidentiality.
  - » Parent and child confidentiality and procedural safeguards in EI.
  - » Within the coaching relationship.

<u>Characteristics of an Effective Coach</u>

- Fosters and uses good communication.
  - » Being clear and ensuring your communication is understood.
  - » Consider communication modality.
  - » Providing effective and reflective feedback, including plenty of positive or affirmative feedback, and making sure negative feedback is reflective and not merely critical.

  - » Be honest.
  - » Recognizing, understanding, and valuing differences in communication styles.

- Encourages personal development.
  - » Understand the strengths, challenges, and needs of the new DS.
  - » Set goals and monitor progress.
  - » Promote growth through reflection.
  - » Provide support and encouragement.

- Serves as a resource.
  - » Leverage your personal or professional networks.
  - » Suggest connections with or resources from professional organizations.
  - » Share knowledge that may be helpful in their work with families.

- Promotes and Engages in Self-Reflection.
  Being self-reflective means:
  - » Carefully considering how your words or actions might be perceived or affect the new DS.
  - » Considering the impact of your personal biases, and how they impact your work as a coach, and as a DS more broadly.
  - » Being sensitive to the personal well-being of the individual they are coaching.

Module 3: Building the Coaching Relationship

Checklist of Activities to Complete during first meeting (see detailed instructions for each activity below)

- ☐ Get to Know Each Other
- ☐ Complete Eco-Mapping
- ☐ Create a Coaching Agreement
- ☐ Create SMART Goals (first or second meeting)
- ☐ Plan Goal Progress Monitoring

- Setting clear, written, expectations.
  - » Ensures that expectations are shared and reduces confusion.
  - » Affords an opportunity to discuss and negotiate expectations.
  - » Reminds both partners that they are making a commitment to this relationship.
  - » Provides a framework to open a discussion if expectations are not being met.

Get to Know Each Other

Consider what information about yourself you might want to share with the DS you are coaching, such as:

- Who are you as a person? What do you like to do? What is important to you?
  - » What brought you to the field?
  - » How long, and in what settings, have you been working as a DS?
  - » What types of training, coaching, or mentoring have you received?
  - » What has been most rewarding about being a DS? What has been challenging? How have you overcome challenges?

- Find out about the experience and background of the DS you will be coaching. Some questions to ask might include:
  - » What brought the new DS to early intervention?
  - » What does the new DS know about the role of the DS? What are they most excited about?
  - » What are their expectations of being a DS?
  - » What questions, uncertainties, or anxieties do they have about starting as a DS?
  - » What do they think is most important for you to know about them?
  - » What is their preferred learning style?

Eco-Mapping

One way to find out more about the networks, needs, and strengths of the DS you are coaching is to complete a DS Eco-map together. See the DS Eco-Mapping Activity in the resources section of the training (or https://ohioearlyintervention.org/credentialing/Evidence-Based-Practice-Coaching) for materials and instructions.

Create a Coaching Agreement

Reference the Coaching Agreement form (EI-19) and its instructions in the resources section of the training (or https://ohioearlyintervention.org/credentialing/Evidence-Based-Practice-Coaching) for more information. Before meeting to create the coaching agreement, make sure you are prepared to discuss some of the following:

- How much time do you have to devote to coaching? How often are you able to meet or be in touch?
- What are the preferred methods of communication (e.g., in-person, phone, e-mail, etc.) for both you and the 1-year DS you are coaching?
- What do you see as your role as a coach?
- If the DS you are coaching does not think things are going well, how would you want them to bring it up? What type of feedback would you be most receptive to?

Create SMART Goals

When brainstorming with the DS you are coaching about goals, a few things to consider include:

- Goals should focus on future development.
- Goals should focus on specific competencies related to practice as a DS.

You or the DS you are coaching might already have ideas about goals that will be useful to work from. If you need additional ideas, it may be helpful to use a tool, to brainstorm goal ideas, either together, as a brainstorming activity, or privately.

- Goals should be clear, concise, and specific.

Using the SMART goals framework will help you set goals together that are specific and measurable.

- Goals can change and be updated over time.

A final activity you will complete together near the beginning of coaching is goal setting. While the goals will primarily be for the 1-year DS, it can be helpful to think about some of your own goals in preparation for this activity as well.

- Look at the SMART goals sheet in the resources section of the training (or https://ohioearlyintervention.org/credentialing/Evidence-Based-Practice-Coaching) and consider setting one or two goals of your own.
- What types of goals did you have (or wish you had!) as a new DS?
  - » If the DS you are coaching has trouble setting goals, what types of goals might you be able to suggest?
  - » As a coach, you may offer competency checklists to the DS you are coaching as a tool for self-reflection. The DS may not know what he/she does not know.
  - » What types of challenges do you know a new DS will face that you might consider when writing goals?

Helpful Tools

National Center for Pyramid Model Innovations (NCPMI) Action Plan Quality Checklist: https://challengingbehavior.cbcs.usf.edu/docs/ActionPlanQualityChecklist.pdf

Family Guided Routines Based Intervention (FGRBI) EI Competencies Checklist: http://box5495.temp.domains/~fgrbicom/wp-content/uploads/2020/03/EICompetencies.pdf

Families in Natural Environments Scale of Service Evaluation: https://www.siskin.org/www/download/125.176

Smart Goal Tool:
https://ohioearlyintervention.org/storage/ocali-ims-sites/ocali-ims-oei/documents/EBPC-S-M-A-R-T-Goal-Worksheet.pdf

Planning Goal Progress Monitoring

Once you have set goals, talk about how you will monitor progress toward goals together. Make a check-in plan and carry it out with accountability.

One simple way to think about progress monitoring is to brainstorm together about the following:

- What do I need to learn or do to accomplish this goal?
- How will we know it is working?
- Why is it important in my practice?

Module 4: Working Together to Enable Growth

Planned Interactions

- Mix of planned interactions and more unstructured conversations.
- Some coaching sessions may be longer; others can be brief interactions or check-ins.
- Can use different interaction methods, such as in-person, virtual, phone, text, or e-mail to:
  - » Set goal check-ins (quarterly at a minimum).
  - » Provide information or resources.
  - » Reflectively coach regarding current families or practices.
  - » Provide in-person coaching or visit observations.

Monitoring Progress toward Goals

- Recommend checking in on goals at least quarterly.
- Do goals need to be modified? New goals added?
- Recognize and celebrate progress.

Providing Information and Resources

- Offering information in areas you believe may be helpful.
  - » The DS you are coaching may not know what they do not know.
  - » Anticipate areas of need based on responsibilities and training so far.
- Providing information that is requested by the DS you are coaching.
- Use your own networks to find information or resources you are not immediately aware of.

Direct Observation of Visits

- Ensure family permission prior to scheduling visit observations.
- You are observing the 1-year DS' visits with a family.
  - » Follow up reflection and coaching.

Reflective Coaching

- Listen carefully to the situation or challenge.
  - » Listen for both content and emotional or relational context.
  - » Make sure you are genuinely listening, not just planning what you will say next.
- Ask reflective questions to:
  - » increase awareness,
  - » encourage analysis,
  - » and solicit alternatives.
- Problem solve through open ended questions and role play to:
  - » generate possible solutions,
  - » consider possible outcomes,
  - » and encourage further analysis.
- Link to Dec Practice TC3: Practitioners use communication and group facilitation strategies to enhance team functioning and interpersonal relationships with and among team members. https://divisionearlychildhood.egnyte.com/dl/7urLPWCt5U/?

Modifying Level of Support Over Time

- Tailor your level of support to the 1-year DS' current skills.
  - » Provide more directive solutions and support early or in more challenging situations.
  - » Provide less support as the new DS gains experience to promote independence.

Trouble-Shooting Coaching Difficulties

- Take the time to ask how the new DS thinks coaching is going, and listen to the answer with an open mind.
- Acknowledge difficulties or challenges without being overly critical.
- Brainstorm together about how to improve the coaching relationship.
- Reflect upon whether you had a role in communication breakdowns or problems.
- Frame challenges as opportunities for growth.

Documenting Coaching Activities

There is NO requirement for either the coach or the Coachee to track their hours/time. It is good professional practice to document one's activities; it helps one's memory and aides both parties if there is some issue or conflict down the line.

If the coach wants to submit time spent actively coaching as professional development units, then the time providing coaching (up to the 20 hours allowed) must be tracked.

Tools
Evidence Based Practice Coaching Log: Word Document

1-year DS (Coachee) log: Word Document

NCPMI Early Intervention Practitioner Coaching Log:
https://challengingbehavior.cbcs.usf.edu/docs/Coaching_Log-Strategies_EI.pdf

Module 5: Ending the Formal Coaching Relationship

Reflection and Re-Visiting Goals
- Expect mixed emotions at the end of the coaching relationship.
- Use final coaching sessions for reflection on the experience.
- Re-visit goals and consider setting new goals.
- Consider how you may continue to support one another after the formal relationship ends.

Re-Visit Eco-Mapping
Near the end of the coaching relationship can be a helpful time to re-visit the Eco-mapping activity you completed together at the beginning of coaching. Update the Eco-map together and consider brainstorming answers to some of the following questions.
- Consider the following questions:
  - What new supports or networks do you have now?
  - Are there any supports you used to rely on that you rely on less now?
  - How has the strength of connections in these networks changed?
  - Are there any areas where you would like to build stronger connections or access new supports or resources?