

Conversation Starters For Early Childhood Intervention Professionals



Shared conversations are an opportunity to talk and listen with other inclusion team members.



- ▶ They help you to connect and start a working relationship.
- ▶ They help you to learn more about other team members and to understand what is important to them.
- ▶ They allow you to share what is important to you.

Shared conversations support the inclusion team to build strong, ongoing, working relationships.

- ▶ They improve communication, enhance teamwork and keep you on track.
- ▶ They help the team to find common ground to work on together, agree on the path forward and keep connected.
- ▶ They help you to work better together.

Shared Conversations come in many forms.

- ▶ They can be informal, such as a short catch-up at drop-off time, or more formal, such as in a planned meeting with all team members.
- ▶ They can be in-person, online, over the phone and through email interactions.



To connect and start a relationship

- ▶ Hello. My name is... My role is... My role involves...
- ▶ Hi. I haven't met (sibling) and/or family member/carer yet. I am... and my role is... What is your name?
- ▶ Hello. I am... and my role is... What is your name? What is your role?
- ▶ These are my contact details. The best time to have a phone/in-person... conversation with me is...
- ▶ Always feel free to contact me by... I can generally get back to you in (time).
- ▶ Is there anything you need to know more about, or I can help you with?



To help you learn about families and carers

- ▶ Tell me about your child and family.
- ▶ What are your hopes/needs/problems/thoughts/goals/ideas for your child's learning and development?
- ▶ What are your hopes/needs/problems/thoughts/goals/ideas about the inclusion of (child) at their ECEC service?
- ▶ What are your priorities for (child)'s inclusion at this service?
- ▶ Who are the people that are important to (child)?
- ▶ Tell me about (child)'s strengths/interests/identity/skills/dispositions...
- ▶ How does (child) prefer to communicate?

- ▶ Are there any challenges you experience at home for (child) with...? (e.g. getting ready for child care, getting to sleep, eating)
- ▶ What helps (child) to feel supported?
- ▶ How do you...? Tell me more about... Can I clarify...? What are your expectations...?
- ▶ Thank you for sharing those assessments and reports. They were very helpful. My understanding is ... Is this your understanding of them?



To help you learn about the Early Childhood Education and Care Service

- ▶ Can you tell me about your service? Can you show me around?
- ▶ Can I have a copy of your service philosophy?
- ▶ Do you have an inclusion policy you can share with me? What do I need to know? How can this policy help us to work together?
- ▶ Would you be able to introduce me to the educators and staff in (child)'s room.
- ▶ What are important service policies and procedures I should be aware of, as a visiting professional?
- ▶ What are your thoughts/goals/ideas about (child)'s learning, development and inclusion at your service? Do you have any priorities?
- ▶ What is your understanding of best practice and how this relates to visits I make to your service?
- ▶ How do you...? Tell me more about... Can I clarify...? What are your expectations...?
- ▶ Thank you for sharing those observations and program documentation for (child). They were very helpful. My understanding is ... Is this your understanding of them?



To share your Early Childhood Intervention Professional perspective

- ▶ Let me share a little about myself and my professional background/ scope of practice/approach/experience... Is there anything else you would you like to know?
- ▶ Can I share my approach to therapy in natural, everyday environments and what this would look like in the service?
- ▶ Can I tell you about the work I have been doing with (child)?
- ▶ My thoughts/goals/ideas about (child)'s learning development are...
- ▶ My priorities for (child)'s inclusion at this service are...
- ▶ My understanding of Best Practice is... At the service, I see this working...
- ▶ Can we talk about suitable times to visit the service?
- ▶ These are some ideas/strategies/practices for (child)'s inclusion at the service I think will be helpful for the inclusion team to know...



To find common ground with other inclusion team members

- ▶ Can we talk about the hopes, needs, problems, thoughts, goals and ideas that might help us find what we want to focus on together?
- ▶ What do you think is important for (child)'s learning and development?
- ▶ What do we need to focus on to support (child)'s learning, development and inclusion at the ECEC service?
- ▶ Can we talk about what we agree is important to focus on first?
- ▶ Let's start small. Let's agree on (shared priority) and start to work on next steps.
- ▶ This might be challenging for... because... Another way to do this could be...



To agree on the path forward

- ▶ Can we get together to talk about the next steps? What day and time will suit?
- ▶ Let's brainstorm what needs to happen to get started.
- ▶ Who will do what? Let's make sure everyone knows what's happening and who is doing it.
- ▶ What else do we need to do? Do we need any extra help us to do this?
- ▶ How will we know when things are working well and we're on the right track?
- ▶ Let's make sure everyone knows what is happening. Who is sharing the plan?



To keep connected and check in on progress

- ▶ Can we schedule a check-in? What day and time will suit?
- ▶ How have you been? Did you get to try that new strategy? How did it go at home/the park/at soccer/at Aunty's?
- ▶ How have things been going at the service for (child)? Is there anything we need to talk about together?
- ▶ I am just checking in to see if you received the information I emailed to you. What do you think about this idea?
- ▶ I have noticed that ... seems to be going well. What are your thoughts?
- ▶ I have noticed that (child) really likes playing with (peer) Can we talk about how we could include this peer in our planned activities for (child)?
- ▶ I have some observations/experiences/ideas about why the inclusion team plan is not working well. When would be a good time to have a chat/meeting about this?
- ▶ Let's get together to review our progress.



To start a more challenging conversation

- ▶ I've noticed that... This makes me think... What is happening from your perspective?
- ▶ I'd like to chat about (issue/problem). Can we schedule a time to talk about it?
- ▶ I am not understanding... Can you help me to...? What am I missing?
- ▶ I need your help with (issue/problem). Let's work out how we can solve it together.
- ▶ I'd like to chat about how we might be able to work better together.
- ▶ I'd really like to hear your ideas. What else could we do?
- ▶ I'd like to share something I've observed. Can I get your help with...?

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