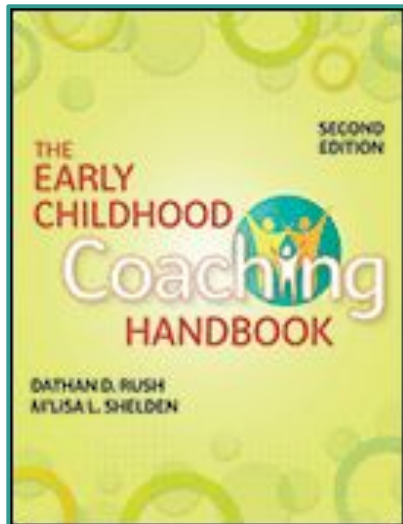
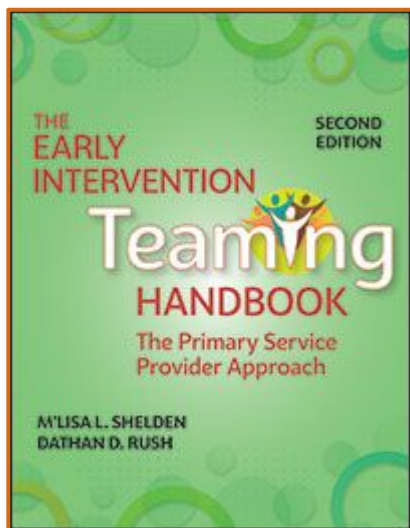




ARIZONA  
DEPARTMENT OF  
ECONOMIC SECURITY

**Coaching Practices:  
Action/Practice  
AzEIP Programmatic Meeting**

June 24, 2025



# Today's Presentation is based on:

The Early Intervention Teaming  
Handbook The Primary Service  
Provider Approach, M'Lisa L. Shelden &  
Dathan D. Rush

and

The Early Childhood Coaching  
Handbook, Dathan D. Rush &  
M'Lisa L. Shelden

# Arizona Early Intervention Program (AzEIP) Mission Statement

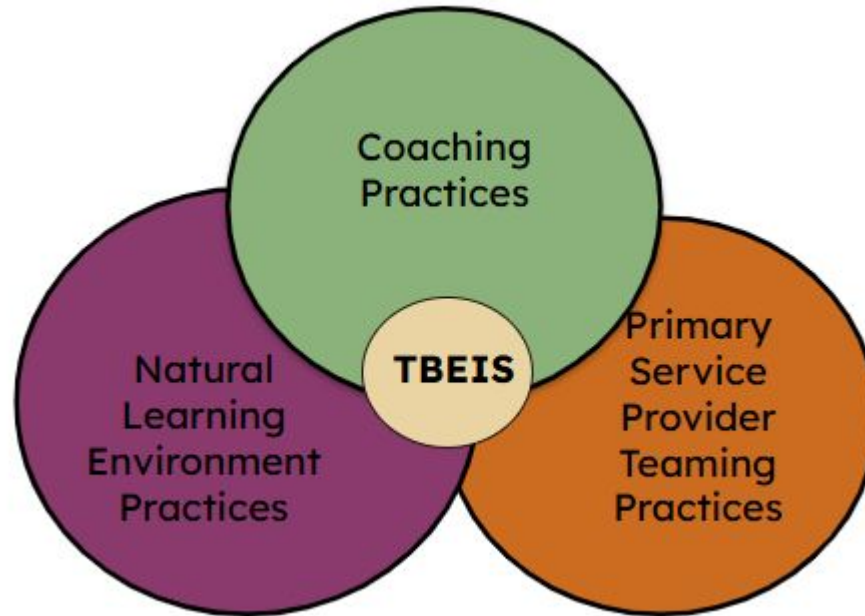
Part C early intervention builds upon and provides supports and resources to assist family members and caregivers to enhance children's learning and development through everyday learning opportunities.



# The 7 Key Principles of Early Intervention

1. Infants and toddlers learn best through everyday experiences and interactions with familiar people in familiar contexts.
2. All families, with the necessary supports and resources, can enhance their children's learning and development.
3. The primary role of a service provider in early intervention is to work with and support family members and caregivers in children's lives.
4. The early intervention process, from initial contacts through transition, must be dynamic and individualized to reflect the child's and family members' preferences, learning styles and cultural beliefs.
5. IFSP outcomes must be functional and based on children's and families' needs and family-identified priorities.
6. The family's priorities, needs and interests are addressed most appropriately by a primary provider who represents and receives team and community support.
7. Interventions with young children and family members must be based on explicit principles, validated practices, best available research, and relevant laws and regulations.

# Team Based Early Intervention Components



# Review of Coaching Components

## Second Component of Coaching: Observation

**Examination of actions or practice to develop new skills, strategies, or ideas.**

### Environment

- Physical Space
- People
- Toys/materials
- Across environments

### Practitioner

observes caregiver

- Reflection
- Joint Planning

### Caregiver observes

practitioner

- Hopeful vs. Intentional Modeling
- 7 Steps of Intentional Modeling

## 3rd Component of Coaching



Joint Planning

Observation

**Action/Practice**

Reflection

Feedback

# Explaining Coaching to Families

I'd like to take a few minutes to talk to you about what our visits will look like.

## OBSERVATION & REFLECTION:

In order to best support you in your everyday interactions and care for your child, I'll be asking you questions and also observing you doing what you usually do in situations that relate to the priorities you have for your child. I'll ask these questions and make these observations for several reasons.

## REFLECTION & FEEDBACK:

First, I want to make sure that I understand what you already tried and explore any ideas you've been thinking about. I'll ask these questions to gain information and also to help you think about what's been working and what hasn't. I expect that you might have lots of questions for me, too. I'll answer your questions openly, and honestly and to the best of my ability.

# Explaining Coaching to Families (continued)

## FEEDBACK & ACTION/PRACTICE & JOINT PLANNING:

As we share information with one another, sometimes you'll be teaching me things about your child and family, and sometimes I'll be sharing new information and ideas with you. **We'll be practicing new ideas together, I'll try things, you'll try things** and during each visit, we'll decide what we will plan together.

## JOINT PLANNING & ACTION/PRACTICE & REFLECTION:

During our planning, we'll decide what we will be responsible for doing between visits. **You'll choose what strategies you will practice as part of your daily activities and think about what worked and what you might do differently as a result of your practice.** We will also plan activities that need to happen or decide what information we need to gather between visits. Our plan will help us decide when our next visit needs to occur.

My intent is that by interacting with you in this way I can support you in recognizing all of the strategies you are already using and we may come up with new ideas together to support your child as part of your everyday activities.

[Sample Coaching Explanation for Parents](#)

# Foundations of Coaching in Early Childhood: Action/Practice



# Defining Action/Practice

Spontaneous or planned events that occur within the context of a real-life situation that provide the caregiver with opportunities to practice, refine, and/or analyze new or existing skills.

## *Coach (Practitioner)*

The practitioner supports the caregiver in practicing, refining and/or analyzing new or existing skills during real life situations during and between coaching visits.



## *Coachee (Caregiver)*

The caregiver tries new ideas or actions that:

- Were previously discussed and planned with coach, or
- Resulted from a previous coaching conversation.


# The Coaching Quick Reference Guide

## The Coaching Quick Reference Guide

**5** The five key characteristics of early childhood coaching are: **joint planning**, **observation**, **action/practice**, **reflection**, and **feedback**. Use this guide to quickly find definitions at your fingertips as well as the role of the coach and coachee for each of these characteristics.

---

### Joint Planning




**Definition**  
Agreement by the coach and coachee on the actions they will take or the opportunities they will have to practice between coaching visits

**What the coach does**  
The coach begins every coaching conversation by reviewing the previous joint plan and asking what the coachee did between conversations to implement the plan. The coach ends every coaching conversation with a plan of who is going to do what by when, based on the actions and ideas discussed.

**What the coachee does**  
The coachee shares what he or she has tried or accomplished between coaching conversations. The coachee identifies what he or she wants to try or accomplish between coaching conversations and suggests when the next conversation should be scheduled.

---


### Observation






**Definition**  
Examination of another person's actions or practices that a coachee can use to develop new skills, strategies, or ideas


**What the coach does**  
The coach observes the coachee within the context of his or her everyday activities.

**What the coachee does**  
The coachee observes the coach model a behavior or activity in the context of an everyday activity with an explicit understanding of what and why he or she is watching.



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by Dathan D. Rush, Ed.D., CCC-SLP & M'Lisa L. Shelden PT, Ph.D.  
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## The Coaching - Quick Reference Guide | Brookes Publishing



### Action/Practice



**Definition**  
Spontaneous or planned events that occur within the context of a real-life situation and that provide the coachee with opportunities to practice, refine, or analyze new or existing skills

**What the coach does**  
The coach supports the coachee in practicing, refining, and/or analyzing new or existing skills during real-life situations that occur during coaching interactions and between coaching visits.

**What the coachee does**  
The coachee tries new ideas or actions that either were previously discussed and planned with the coach or resulted from a previous coaching conversation.

---

### Reflection



**Definition**  
Analysis of existing strategies that a coachee can use to determine whether the strategies are consistent with evidence-based practices and whether these strategies may need to be implemented without change or modified to obtain the intended outcomes)

**What the coach does**  
The coach uses reflective questions to assist the coachee in analyzing the current situation, then encourages the coachee to generate alternatives and actions for continually improving his or her knowledge and skills, thereby achieving the desired outcomes.

**What the coachee does**  
The coachee determines what worked or did not work and why it did or did not during the observation and/or action, as well as generates ideas for next steps.

---

### Feedback



**Definition**  
Information provided by the coach that is based on his or her direct observations of the coachee, actions reported by the coachee, or information shared by the coachee and that is designed to expand the coachee's current level of understanding about a specific evidence-based practice or to affirm the coachee's thoughts or actions related to the intended outcomes

**What the coach does**  
The coach uses noncommittal acknowledgment when it is appropriate to affirm what the parent or care provider says or does. He or she provides positive feedback when it is necessary. He or she shares information to build on the coachee's knowledge and skills.

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# Practice

- Occurs while the practitioner is present and after:
  - The caregiver has observed the practitioner, or
  - Something was discussed that does not require the practitioner to model.
- Practice allows the caregiver to try the new skill, strategy or idea while the practitioner observes.
- The practitioner has the opportunity to:
  - Prompt the caregiver to reflect on what worked and what did not work.
  - Provide immediate feedback related to the:
    - Caregiver's reflections.
    - Practitioner's direct observations.

# Action

- Occurs between coaching conversations.
- Allows the caregiver the opportunity to use the knowledge, skills, strategies and ideas that were identified or learned during the coaching conversation.
- Opportunities for action are:
  - Included in the joint plan developed at the end of a session, and
  - Revisited at the beginning of each new coaching conversation.

# Action/Practice to better support families and children

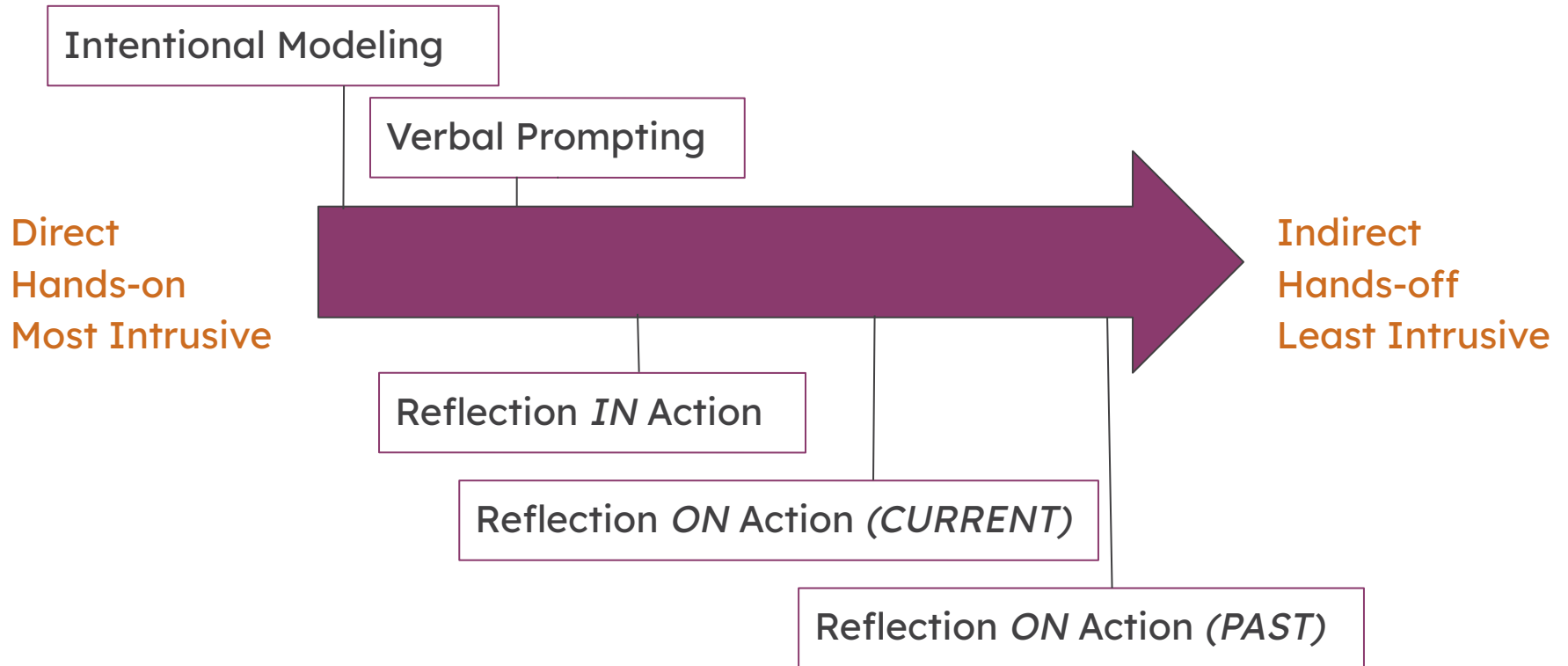
Action/Practice	What it might look like
<p>Action/Practice opportunities allow the caregiver to try out new strategies and refine them over time.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● Practice occurs in the presence of the practitioner:<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ Who models a strategy for the caregiver (if necessary),</li><li>○ Observes the caregiver using the technique, and</li><li>○ Afterward, the practitioner and caregiver reflect together on what worked, what didn't work and why.</li></ul></li><li>● Opportunities for action:<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ Usually take place between coaching sessions,</li><li>○ Allow the caregiver to work on skills and strategies they've learned from the practitioner,</li><li>○ Are added to the joint plan at the end of the coaching session, and</li><li>○ Are reviewed at the beginning of the next visit.</li></ul></li></ul>	<p>A parent who wants to make the most of bedtime reading discusses and practices some new strategies with the practitioner during their visit.</p> <p>That night, the parent:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● Encourages the child to pick out a book,</li><li>● Talks about the pictures as they read, and</li><li>● Stops to allow the child a chance to describe what they see on each page.</li></ul>  <p>Adapted from Dathan D. Rush &amp; M'Lisa L. Shelden</p>

# Continuum of Involvement by the Practitioner

During Action/Practice, practitioners must:

- Be mindful of effective adult learning strategies that affect a caregiver's ability to experience success within a given situation.
- Pay attention to how their presence influences the real-life context in which the caregiver typically engages without the practitioner's contributions.

# Continuum of Coach Involvement



# Intentional Modeling

## Intentional modeling:

- Most direct, hands on and invasive strategy.
- Practitioner models > caregiver observes > practitioner and caregiver reflect.
- Caregiver needs to be engaged and able to observe.
- Helps practitioner identify strategies or level of support that may work best for a caregiver.
- Helps the caregiver identify alternative methods for actions or strategies.

## Considerations:

- Overuse could create dependency.
- May not be the preferred learning style of all caregivers.

# Verbal Prompting

## Verbal prompting:

- Directive, but somewhat less hands on and intrusive than modeling.
- Caregiver engages in an activity with the child > practitioner provides verbal prompts and support > practitioner and caregiver reflect on:
  - How suggestions or prompts worked,
  - Continued use of the strategy within this and similar activities, and
  - How to build on what is working.
- Prompts may be:
  - Directly related to strategies or actions that have recently been discussed, tried, or planned, or
  - New suggestions made by the coach as the caregiver is directly engaged with the child.

## Considerations:

- Key is to provide suggestions only long enough for the caregiver to become comfortable with the strategy or actions.
- Overuse could create dependency.
- May not be the preferred learning style of all caregivers.

# Using Coaching Strategies to Engage with Families



# Reflection *In* Action

Reflection *IN* Action = Reflection *DURING* an activity

- Hands on interaction by the caregiver while the practitioner observes.
- “Just-in-time coaching” or “coaching-on-the-fly”.
- Examples:
  - What is happening right now?
  - What are you doing right now that is going to get you to your goal?
  - What could you try right now?

# Reflection *On* Action (*CURRENT*)

Reflection *ON* Action (Current) =  
Reflection *AFTER* an activity

- Practitioner directly observes the caregiver and child practice.
- Practitioner and caregiver immediately reflect together *after* the activity.
- Examples:
  - What just happened?
  - How did that compare to what you wanted to have happen?
  - What else might work better?

# Reflection *On* Action (*PAST*)

Reflection *ON* Action (Past) = Reflection *BEFORE* an activity  
= Reflection *FOR* Action

- The least directive, least hands-on, and least intrusive strategy on the coaching continuum.
- Caregiver reports on what happened during an action between visits.
- *Before* the next activity, the practitioner and caregiver reflect on what the caregiver *will do* next time based on what they learned.
- Example:
  - Considering what we just discussed what do you plan to do similarly or differently next time?

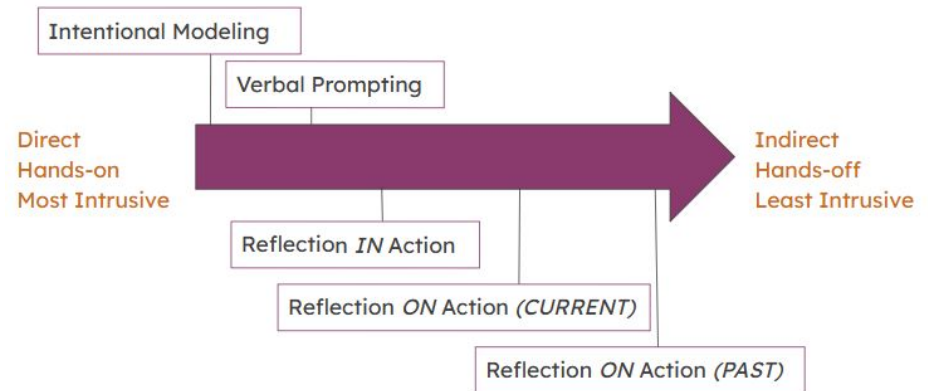
# Coaching a Family During an Early Intervention Visit



# Continuum: How Do You Know?

The practitioner chooses where to start on the continuum depending on:

- The context,
- The situation, and
- The parent/caregiver's level of:
  - Confidence,
  - Knowledge, and
  - Skill.



# At-A-Glance Coaching for Action/Practice

## Action/Practice

- Ask the parent/teacher to demonstrate what worked or did not work from the previous plan during the current visit if appropriate
- Provide opportunities within the present activity settings or routines for the parent/teacher to demonstrate/practice new knowledge, skills, and/or strategies based on discussion/reflection and/or your modeling
- Use verbal prompting or direct teaching when necessary to support parent/teacher success in promoting child participation within the activity setting/routine
- Identify how the parent/teacher will continue to use the newly learned knowledge, skills, and/or strategies in the current and future activities/routines

- Demonstrate what worked or did not work.
- Provide opportunities to practice.
- Use coaching continuum to support the caregiver.
- Identify how strategies will be used currently & in the future.

# Early Intervention: Family-Centered Best Practices



# TBEIS Fidelity

A practitioner's faithfulness to implementing team-based early intervention practices (coaching, natural learning environment, and primary service provider approach) as planned and intended.

# Fidelity Checklist

## Action/Practice Fidelity

<b>1: Starting Point</b>	The Team Lead interacts with the child to model a specific behavior or activity or to assess the child in the context of an everyday activity while the parent watches.		
<b>3: Progressing</b>	The Team Lead interacts with the child to model a specific behavior or activity or to assess the child in the context of an everyday activity while the parent watches.	The Team Lead encourages the parent or caregiver to try new ideas and activities that were discussed or planned and that relate to the parent's or caregiver's priorities for the child within routines or activity settings.	
<b>5: Innovating</b>	The Team Lead interacts with the child to model a specific behavior or activity or to assess the child in the context of an everyday activity while the parent watches.	The Team Lead encourages the parent or caregiver to try new ideas and activities that were discussed or planned and that relate to the parent's or caregiver's priorities for the child within routines or activity settings.	The Team Lead uses all five strategies on the Continuum of Coach Involvement (intentional modeling, verbal prompt, reflection in action, reflection on action current, reflection on action past) to tailor the level of support to reflect individual family needs, preferences, and learning styles.

# Definitions

Term	Definition
Coach	The person who uses the coaching characteristics to support the learning and development of another individual. *For this presentation “coach” is referring to the practitioner.
Coachee	The person who receives the support of the coach. *For this presentation, “coachee” is referring to the caregiver.
Core Team	The full team of practitioners, other than the service coordinator, who support the child and family.
Practitioner	Professional, including the service coordinator, who provides Part C early intervention services.
Primary Service Provider Teaming Practices	Every child and family have a full team supporting and available to them, but one person functions as the primary support.

# General Reminders

- When there is a loss of contact with a family, please ensure Service Coordinators are communicating with all active team members.
- Be sure to use the most current version of all forms (available in the DES Documents Center).
- Ensure the “Date DDD Eligibility Requested” has been entered on the I-TEAMS Eligibility page when submitting a DDD referral to initiate the I-TEAMS to FOCUS push.

# Who Are We Missing?

If you or someone you know does not currently receive invites to the monthly AzEIP Programmatic Meetings and/or materials shared and would like to, please email the following information to Amanda Honeywood at [ahoneywood@azdes.gov](mailto:ahoneywood@azdes.gov):

- Service Providing Agency Name
- Staff Name
- Staff Email Address
- Invites to Programmatic Meetings - Yes/No?
- Access to Programmatic Meeting Materials - Yes/No?

# Resources

- The Early Intervention Teaming Handbook The Primary Service Provider Approach by M’Lisa Shelden & Dathan D. Rush
- The Early Childhood Coaching Handbook by Dathan D. Rush & M’Lisa Shelden
- The Early Intervention Workbook Essential Practices for Quality Services by Lynda Cook Pletcher and Naomi O Younggren
- Family Centered EI: Supporting Infants and Toddlers in Natural Environments by Sharon A. Raver-Lampman and Dana Childress
- Pause and Reflect: Your Guide to a Deeper Understanding of Early Intervention Practice by Dana Childress
- Routines-Based Early Intervention Supporting Young Children and Their Families by R.A. McWilliam

# Resources (continued)

## FIPP resources:

- [To The Point - FIPP](#)
- [Ensure Provider Fidelity to Coaching Practices](#)
- [Five ways to Scaffold Caregiver Learning](#)
- [The Coaching - Quick Reference Guide | Brookes Publishing](#)
- [Coaching: Modeling](#)
- [Coaching: Action/Practice and Observation](#)

## Video clips:

- [Foundations of Coaching in Early Childhood: Action/Practice \(Chapter 4\)](#)
- [Using Coaching Strategies to Engage With Families in an Early Intervention Context](#)
- [Coaching a Family during an Early Intervention Visit](#)
- [Early Intervention: Family-Centered Best Practices](#)

# Thank You for Participating

## Arizona Early Intervention Program Quality Improvement Team

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- Erica Melies, AzEIP Quality Improvement Manager
- Tanya Goitia, AzEIP Continuous Quality Improvement Coordinator
- Pamela Meurer, AzEIP Continuous Quality Improvement Coordinator
- Anissa Albert, AzEIP Technical Assistance Specialist
- Amanda Tipotsch, AzEIP Technical Assistance Specialist
- Amanda Honeywood, AzEIP Administrative Assistant