



Culture In Context

Advocating for Family Priorities

Cultural background may play a role in a family's acceptance of different aspects of early intervention services. Some families have religious and/or other cultural beliefs about the cause of disabilities or illnesses and how they should be treated. Some families may not trust medical or other professionals, whereas others may think they should not question anything a professional tells them. Here is some information to keep in mind as you support families in advocating for their priorities with other professionals.

What EI Practitioners Need to Know:

- The family's previous history with medical/other professionals and services and their experiences (good and bad).
- What families believe and understand about medicine, therapy, education, professionals, etc.
- Familial or community influences to adhere to certain cultural systems or beliefs in raising their children.

What Families Need to Know:

- Their child's medical/developmental/ educational history.
- How to share their priorities, concerns, history, and what is important to their family with professionals.
- What different professionals may need to know and why they may ask for certain information.
- How to ask questions if they need an interpreter or don't fully understand something that is discussed or recommended.