



## Teaming Scenario

*Directions:* Each small group will be assigned to take the perspective of one of the team members listed below. Assign one person in your group to read your assigned character description out loud. Then reflect on and discuss answers to the questions on handout #4.

### Team Description

Each of the team members in the following description is committed to doing his or her best for young children with disabilities and their families.

#### Amelia: the Parent

Amelia is the parent on the team and has served in leadership roles with the Head Start (with her older children) and the Early Head Start program (with her 2.5-year-old Kyle, who has significant disabilities). She has served on the policy council and other parent committees. She is very involved with her children, and has also offered her support to other families in the program who have children with disabilities. She participates in listservs and other networking and support opportunities with other parents who have children with the same diagnosis as Kyle.

Amelia enjoys being part of the team, but sometimes feels frustrated that the team seems to focus more on rules and regulations than on family support—which she feels is the heart of their program. She is very involved with the upcoming transition for Kyle and is unclear about how she will participate in the team after the transition takes place. She also does not want to do anything to jeopardize her relationship with the team while she is going through this stressful transition process.

#### Irene: the Early Intervention Partner

Irene is new to the team and new to her job. She recently graduated as a registered occupational therapist and has not had many opportunities to work on a team, other than through a practicum in graduate school. She was trained to conduct therapy in a one-on-one setting, although she has read literature on the importance of children with disabilities being with their typically developing peers. She knows the law about natural environments but has not had experience delivering services in inclusive settings. She is getting to know the early intervention system in this community.

### Session 6 Handout #3



Irene is feeling a bit overwhelmed by having to learn so much. She does not feel completely confident in her skills as a practitioner, let alone her role on the team. She is also concerned about being able to train other people in her areas of expertise. She is taking advantage of being part of the SpecialQuest team to network with other early intervention practitioners on strategies for providing early intervention services in Early Head Start and child care settings.

### **Sarina: the Teacher**

Sarina is a friend of Amelia's family and is committed to having Amelia's child in her class. She enjoys her home visits with Amelia's family. She appreciates the clear goals that the team has for the community, but sometimes gets frustrated that they are not moving quickly enough in implementing those goals.

Sarina is a very intense individual and passionate about her work. Because she gets frustrated when things do not happen right away, she sometimes comes across as abrupt and judgemental.

### **Daniel: the Disabilities Coordinator**

Daniel has worked in Head Start for years, beginning as a parent and later going to school in order to move up within the agency. There has been some reorganization in the agency in response to implementing the Head Start Performance Standards; so many of the managers are generalists, but have additional specialized responsibilities. Daniel has been assigned as disabilities coordinator for both Early Head Start and Head Start.

Although Daniel has extensive experience in Head Start, he has little formal training in the area of serving infants and toddlers with disabilities and their families. He is starting to take some classes and is learning as much as he can from networking with other colleagues in his state.

Daniel feels that he has a lot to offer from his experience in Head Start—his father involvement and his experience with transition of preschoolers to kindergarten. But sometimes he feels undervalued by the other team members because of his limited experience with infants and toddlers.

## **Session 6 Handout #3**



### **Juanita: the Administrator**

Juanita is completely committed to the inclusion of infants and toddlers with disabilities and their families in her Early Head Start program. She has served as a disabilities coordinator in the past and provides support and information to the new disabilities coordinator and to families and staff in this area.

Juanita must work with administrators from the larger organization who are not particularly supportive of the work that she is doing to serve children with disabilities and their families in their program. The administration is concerned about liability issues and has many fears about serving young children with disabilities and their families.

Juanita is committed to quality and would like to enhance the continuous improvement process, although that is not the “cultural norm” in her agency.

### **Steve: the Child Care Director**

Steve is the director of the community child care center serving children birth to five years of age. Early Head Start has developed a partnership agreement with his center to expand childcare opportunities for their Early Head Start families. He is supportive of inclusion, but some of the child care staff have been reluctant to include children with disabilities in their classrooms and are questioning their ability to provide services for these children. Steve and Amelia have been discussing the possibility of Kyle receiving child care in Steve’s program when he transitions from Early Head Start.



## The Team's Action Plans

- ◆ *To partner with child care to increase opportunities for children with disabilities in natural environments.*
- ◆ *To communicate and collaborate among Early Head Start /early intervention/child care in order to share resources, training, strengths, and knowledge and to make referrals and support families of children with disabilities.*
- ◆ *To develop a transition team with all early childhood community partners to expand inclusive services to preschoolers and their families.*

## The Team's Causes to Pause

- ◆ *They need support from the executive director and the other agency administrators from early intervention and child care.*
- ◆ *They have experienced some conflict among the Early Head Start teaching staff and other early intervention service providers because Early Head Start staff are not included in the planning and development of Individualized Family Service Plans (IFSPs).*
- ◆ *The early intervention system tends to refer only children with "mild" disabilities to the Early Head Start program; so Kyle is the only child with a significant disability in this Early Head Start program. Amelia was already being served in Early Head Start when Kyle was born. He was identified as having a disability at birth, so joint services between Early Head Start and early intervention were a natural fit.*