

Supporting Referral and Evaluation: *The Referral Process*

SUPPORTING FAMILIES THROUGH THE REFERRAL PROCESS



Scenario: Christopher

Imagine that Christopher, a three-year-old child in your program, consistently uses only one-to-two-word utterances such as “want more” and “Mama.” The family has shared concerns with you about Christopher’s language use. You also have noticed Christopher does not play with other children in the classroom. Developmental screening conducted by the family and teacher/provider also indicates Christopher should be referred for a diagnostic evaluation.

Step 1: Collaborate with Families

What are some ways you could start the conversation with family members? Record your ideas for open-ended questions below.

Step 2: Share Information About the Referral Process

Why is Example 2 a better way to approach the family? With a partner, review the two examples. Share your thoughts with a partner.

Example 1

After observing a child over a period of time the teacher/provider comments, in a meeting with the family: “I noticed Christopher is not talking much. I think he might have a delay, maybe autism.”

Example 2

After the family completes a developmental screening, the teacher/provider goes over the results with the family, shares observations they have, and identifies any concerns. Then the teacher/provider comments: “The screening indicates that Christopher may have a language delay. I’d like to refer him for a diagnostic evaluation. What do you think? I will help you with this process.”

Step 3: Follow Up with Families

Think of an example of how you could check in with parents after they have contacted the evaluation agency. For example, you might say: “How did your call to the school district go? What types of support did they offer?”

Write down an example and share it with a partner.
