



# COMMUNICATING WELL WITH YOUR CHILD'S HEALTHCARE PROVIDERS

## A GUIDE TO ACTION STEPS

### CAREGIVER PREPARATION

Do you sometimes feel unprepared for medical visits?

- ✔ Bring a summary of your child's health history to appointments, especially for new providers.
- ✔ Write down your questions and concerns ahead of the visit with your child's provider.
- ✔ Help the provider prepare by letting them know the **top three** things you want to discuss during the appointment in advance.



### CAREGIVER KNOWLEDGE

Do you wish you knew more about your child's condition?



- ✔ Learn as much as you can about your child's condition and treatments. To start, visit:
  - The Mayo Clinic's health library ([www.mayoclinic.org/diseases-conditions](http://www.mayoclinic.org/diseases-conditions))
  - The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's National Center on Birth Defects and Developmental Disabilities (NCBDDD) ([www.cdc.gov/ncbddd](http://www.cdc.gov/ncbddd))
- ✔ Ask the provider to suggest websites or other resources targeted to your child's specific needs.
- ✔ Ask the provider to connect you with another family who has had similar experiences.

### FAMILY CULTURE, SUPPORTS, AND STRESSORS

Are there non-medical factors that may also affect your child's care (or the way you approach your child's care)?

- ✔ Share information about your family's culture, religion, living arrangements, supports, and stressors with the provider.



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## COMMUNICATION PREFERENCES

Do you have a good way to communicate questions before or after a visit?

- ✓ Ask the provider about the best way to reach them if you have a question.
- ✓ Talk to the provider about how you prefer to communicate.



## UNDERSTANDING INFORMATION

Do you sometimes struggle to understand the information the provider has given?

- ✓ Give the provider feedback to make sure they give you the information you need in a way that you can understand. Let the provider know if you would like information restated or if a drawing/figure would help.
- ✓ You might ask for information in writing or additional time to process information.

## COLLABORATIVE DECISION MAKING

How do you participate in decision-making about your child's care?



- ✓ Share important values related to treatment decision-making with the provider.
- ✓ Let the provider know if you prefer to hear the best option in their professional opinion, or if you would like to talk about all of the options in order to make a decision.

## INTER-PROVIDER COMMUNICATION

Does your child have multiple medical providers?

- ✓ Let the provider know about other providers involved in your child's care and share their contact information if you have it.



## APPOINTMENT LOGISTICS

Do you sometimes struggle with the timing and length of medical appointments?

- ✓ Schedule the first or last visit of the day with the provider.
- ✓ Be prepared for the waiting room. Bring items to help your child wait well.



## ACCURACY OF MEDICAL RECORDS

Are you concerned about mistakes in your child's medical record?

- ✓ Review your child's medical record; ask the provider for help if you are unsure how.
- ✓ Contact the provider to make any corrections.

