Facilitator Guide
Working Together Series

Center for Appropriate Dispute Resolution in Special Education

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Thank you to everyone who assisted with the design and review of the *Working Together Series*!

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Why the Working Together Series?

Collaborative relationships among family members and educators are critical to student success. And yet, as in all important relationships, disputes will happen. How might these disputes be engaged constructively? How might those relationships be strengthened so that differences are handled with the least cost to all involved? Answering these questions is the work to which CADRE is dedicated.

We create tools that you can use now. The *Working Together Series* provides strategies that you can immediately put into action to improve family-school relationships. In addition to this Facilitator Guide, supplemental resources for each course can be found on the online learning platform. You may also want to visit our website (www.cadreworks.org) and explore related resources and other great tools and information. Feedback from the field has been very positive about the series.

Here is a little bit about what folks are saying:

"…it is a very worthwhile series. The courses are just long enough and simple enough to understand and follow. Very practical. I hope schools and families get the word. I could see it used in trainings for staff, especially new teachers. As a former special education administrator, I can see lots of ways to use this and with hopes of increasing that collaboration and inclusiveness we so need in the world of special education."

Former Special Education Administrator

"…I think it is very clear and user friendly. I especially love that it is designed for both parents and educators, so it doesn't feel like they are getting different trainings."

Parent Advocate

"…The information contained within these lessons is golden, and will help all stakeholders understand the process and procedure in a non-threatening, accessible manner…The content…is very relatable to both educators and family members…Additionally, the considerations for different aspects, such as cultural differences, values and time/school limitations, are very helpful to open up dialogue regarding how to create conditions that move past some of these barriers."

School Psychologist

"…I think it is fantastic. I thought the juxtaposition between the different perspectives regarding Mateo, and what was actually conveyed at the meeting, was a perfect example of poor communication that leads to due process!"

State Special Education Dispute Resolution Director

CADRE's staff of experts in dispute resolution in special education engaged with a diverse group of stakeholders. We worked with people from State Education Agencies, Parent Training Centers, Local Education Agencies, higher education and conflict resolution specialists, as well as parent advocates.

One online learning series designed for both educators and parents. From the beginning, stakeholders strongly recommended one series for both parents and educators. In designing the courses, we followed the principle that if we all share the same information and approach to preventing disputes or resolving them early, we can work together to improve our skills over time for the benefit of children with disabilities. We think that most people participating in the IEP process, including teachers, administrators, psychologists, related service providers, parents, parent center staff and trainers, and parent advocates, will benefit from the *Working Together Series*.

Educators and parents have different challenges. These courses are designed to encourage both educators and parents to learn something new about others' challenges or experiences, and to highlight how participants might experience the same meeting very differently from each other. Embedded in the courses are targeted suggestions for specific IEP Team members. Learners can choose to skip the targeted sections that may not pertain to them or opt to view all of the pathways.

Companion materials available for students. While the *Working Together Series* is specifically designed for adults participating in the IEP process, CADRE encourages students to participate in their IEP meetings when possible. CADRE has developed an online series just for students entitled, *Your Journey to Self-Determination*, along with a Facilitator Guide found at: https://www.cadreworks.org/resources/your-journey-self-determination-series.

How to use the courses. These courses can be viewed independently or as a group. Users can decide when and where they would like to take the courses, and they can view them at their own pace. Although the individual lessons build upon one another and are designed to be taken in order, learners may focus on the courses they find most useful and repeat content as they choose. Each course includes opportunities to write in answers to reflective questions.

Technology and Accessibility. These online courses were designed to be accessed via PCs and mobile devices. The best mobile experiences will occur on iPads and Chromebooks. Internet Explorer is recommended for greatest accessibility. Measures

have been taken to make these courses 508 accessible (e.g., use of Universal Design principles, narration, closed captioning, keyboard navigation, transcripts). These courses are not compatible with Mozilla Firefox at this time. To access the *Working Together Series* and the Facilitator Guide, visit: https://www.cadreworks.org/resources/cadre-materials/working-together-online-learning-series.

Facilitators and participants may need to create individual accounts to view the courses and an email address is required for each account.

Available translations. The courses and this Facilitator Guide will be available in Spanish by spring 2019.

Facilitator Guide can be used with or without facilitation experience. Although having an experienced facilitator to guide supplemental activities is helpful, we want to encourage as many people as possible to use the courses and work together in groups to practice skills and delve deeper into the content. This guide offers suggestions for using the material and supplemental activities. We provide this Facilitation Guide as a roadmap for parents or educators who have never led any groups to assist them in encouraging interaction and providing effective learning environments.

Facilitator Guide is designed to encourage skill practice. Practice is critical to skill development and meaningful application of those skills. Several activities are included in the Guide to specifically foster practice and reflection, including many options to help participants in between sessions.

Facilitator Guide offers numerous options to allow flexibility. All strategies and activities outlined in this Guide should be considered suggestions. Understanding the needs of your group (e.g., group dynamics, trust, skills), as well as available resources (e.g., space, time, technology) will allow you to select the most appropriate strategies and activities.

Adults learn best when they can exercise self-determination over when, how, and why they are learning. Adults have opinions about what they need to learn and want to focus on material that will be immediately useful to them. In contrast to children, adults have a whole range of life experiences to bring to their learning. They learn better when they can relate the material they are learning to those life experiences. Adults also prefer to apply what they have learned right away to an action and then reflect on what happened. Learning and then practicing skills helps lessons stick and increases the ability to apply the learning to real-life situations.

Motivation is key. While some people who complete the courses may seek them out independently, others may be required to take them. Regardless of how learners come to the courses, demonstrating how the material will be beneficial to them will increase the motivation to learn and implement changes in behaviors. Real time, real-world examples that show participants how they can immediately use the strategies in the courses to solve their problems will motivate them. Motivated learners are more likely to engage in discussions and activities that help develop content knowledge and skills.

Encouraging participants to share examples of effective collaboration and conflict strategies (both those found in the courses as well as others) helps:

1. Make the content more meaningful; and

2. Helps participants make connections to prior knowledge – an important step in encoding information into one's long-term memory.

Also, as a facilitator, you can encourage participants to discuss their current challenges and needs related to working together and though conflict in order to support students. Adults are more interested in learning if they believe the material addresses their current challenges.

Curiosity is important to learning. Through advances in brain research, we are learning how the brain changes when impacted by different experiences. University of California Davis neuroscientists examined adult brains to determine the role of curiosity in learning and found, not only did people learn better when they were curious about what they were learning, but their memory or retention of the information increased. Second, the centers in the brain that indicate reward and pleasure lit up when learning occurred after curiosity was sparked. While facilitating your group, one way to enhance curiosity is to tell a relevant story, or to ask participants to share a story from their own experiences that applies to the material in the session.

Adults learn best through dialogue with each other. Research and experience has shown that adults benefit from small groups where dialogue between participants is encouraged. The focus is placed on participants learning from each other through dialogue, not on the teacher or facilitator imparting knowledge onto the participants (Vella, 2002, p. 51). When adults can reflect on what they are learning and discuss their ideas with others, their learning is deepened by grappling with how the material fits in with their experiences, perspectives and beliefs. Open-ended questions, such as, "What do you think makes an IEP Team function best and why?" or, "What do you think the role of time is in conflicts between staff and between staff and parents?" encourage

> What makes an IEP Team function best?

> Does time play a role in conflict?

dialogue. Each course includes reflective questions that can be used to share answers or discuss as a group. Exploring the courses in a group setting allows you to create a community of practice focused on learning better communication and dispute resolution skills together.

Expand learning opportunities beyond face-to-face sessions. While your group meetings provide a good community to learn the material in the courses, using a variety of tools to provide more opportunities outside of group sessions can enhance your participants' learning. For educators, many schools or districts have a variety of technology tools that can create private online discussion groups. In between sessions, particularly if sessions must be short to accommodate scheduling, using online tools to pose questions, ask for feedback or share successes can deepen learning. Often parent organizations have access to simple tools, such as listservs, to provide a forum for participants.

> **Schedule a video or phone conference with Zoom or FreeConference.com**

Consider scheduling a telephone or video conference in between sessions using a free service such as Zoom or FreeConference.com. For example, using online tools and asking participants from your group to apply some strategies in the course to a real situation before the next session and then share their experiences with the group can deepen the experience of all participants. In an online forum participants can reflect on the shared experiences. These experiences can be brought back to the face-to-face meeting where you can ask the group if they have any questions/comments for the participant who shared or ask the group if they noticed any themes emerge.

Create a safe environment. In addition to motivation, adults need a safe space to learn. Whatever a participant's experience has been with dispute resolution, these

courses ask them to reflect personally on their own behaviors. Some people might be challenged to change their habits. Some people may have slightly different views of how to implement the general suggestions in the materials and will need time to process. To prepare for each session, we suggest that you take a few moments to think about what challenges your participants might have with the material. Think about how you might handle those challenges to help create a safe environment for all participants.

Here are some examples of possible challenges:

Professional staff who work regularly together may not feel comfortable sharing personal feelings about emotions and interactions with parents and each other.

Parents might feel reluctant to share because they don't know each other well.

Because of personality or background, participants may feel that some of the material is not appropriate to discuss with others publicly.

Some participants may never have taken a course or are not sure what to expect.

Provide participants an opportunity to discuss what to expect. Provide participants with a good description of the courses and how you plan to conduct the sessions. Give them a chance to ask questions, share ideas, or voice concerns about your plans to create an atmosphere of respect and approachability and increase active participation. We have provided Opening the Sessions activities (see pp. 25-28) and Course Handout (see Appendix A, pp. 73-74) to assist you in facilitating this discussion.

Create a welcoming environment. Adults also learn best in a comfortable and welcoming environment. There are numerous things that you can do to make participants feel more comfortable in your sessions:

❖ Greet people individually when they arrive to communicate that their participation is valued.

❖ Wherever you decide to hold the training, the room should have comfortable chairs, good air circulation, and be pleasant.

❖ If your meetings are held in a regular staff meeting room, add something out of the ordinary to the room to signal that working with this material has a special purpose. Consider displaying pictures of children or inspirational posters, add a few plants, provide an array of interesting and related books, and make available water or some simple refreshment such as tea or coffee.

❖ Consider the accessibility needs for people with disabilities with regards to the space and your instruction. Some needs may be obvious, while others may be hidden. Invite participants to speak to you privately about any special needs they may have (see Technology and Accessibility, pp. 6-7). A good approach is to design universally (with anyone in mind) and adapt accordingly.

Actively welcome the different backgrounds of participants and students.
Learners come from different kinds of families and backgrounds – single parent, grandparent-led families, gay parents, multigenerational households, languages spoken at home other than English, military families, recent immigrants or undocumented family members. For example, they may have different education backgrounds, perhaps they were the first in their family to attend college or pursue technical education, or maybe their education comes from challenging life experiences. They likely will differ by race and ethnicity, as well as come from varied religious or other types of belief systems. They may come from rural areas or urban centers. The geography in the U.S. is vast and has created many wonderful local and regional cultures. Many people move from their hometown to other locations with cultures that may be unfamiliar with wide differences in financial resources.

The *Working Together Series* promotes recognizing and being responsive to differences. The courses also show that while we are different, most of us are united in our desire to get along and to make our IEP process function well so children with disabilities benefit. While facilitating, model welcoming different views and encouraging participants to share their different experiences and perspectives. This general approach applies whether your group is known or new to each other. Different experiences are not always apparent. Seek opportunities to learn from each other.

To Learn More…

Gruber, M. J., Gelman, B. D., & Ranganath, C. (2014). Curiosity important to education: States of modulate hippocampus-dependent learning via the dopaminergic circuit, Neuron, 84(2), 486-496. Retrieved from https://doi.org/10.1016/j.neuron.2014.08.060.

Vella, J. (rev. ed. 2002). Twelve principles of effective adult learning. In Learning to listen, learning to teach: The power of dialogue in educating adults, (pp 3-27). San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass. Retrieved from http://globallearningpartners.com/downloads/resources/LTL_Sample_Chapter.pdf.

Wenger-Trayner, E. & Wenger-Trayner, B., (2015). Introduction to communities of practice. Retrieved from http://wenger-trayner.com/introduction-to-communities-of-practice/.

In this section, we make suggestions for how the courses may be used in existing settings, groups or professional development. In addition, each lesson can be broken down into shorter segments and enhanced with supplemental activities, follow-up discussions, and/or group consideration of reflective questions. Critical to leading effective groups is providing participants opportunities to try out the skills and suggestions in the courses and then get back together to discuss their successes and challenges. Single exposure to the course material likely will not result in significant change of perspectives and behaviors. Follow-up is critical to long-term success.

Families

Federally-funded parent centers. There are over 100 parent training and information centers (PTIs) and community parent resource centers (CPRCs) in the U.S. that work with families of children with disabilities. Most centers have regular parent trainings they conduct throughout the year. With the help of this Facilitator Guide, any center could use the courses, or a parent could request that a center create a collaborative learning group for parents focused on the *Working Together Series*. Providing stipends for participation, childcare, and/or respite care, makes it possible for a wider group of parents to participate in any training. To find a parent training center in your state, go to: https://www.cadreworks.org/find-state-agency-parent-center-information.

Parent Advisory Councils (PAC). Many schools have volunteer advisory councils composed of parents of children with special needs in the district that often provide advice to school administrators and promote communication between parents and schools. For instance, a principal may ask for a PAC to help in getting more parents to attend their child's IEP meeting. The PAC could decide to take a portion of each PAC meeting to do part of a course and use the reflective questions for discussion. Each subsequent meeting could provide a chance for the group to discuss what successes and challenges the members might have had in between meetings trying out the suggestions or new skills.

Parent mentors. State parent centers may utilize parent mentors to train and coach other parents across the state on a variety of issues. Since the courses can be viewed online, participants are able to view courses independently and then discuss virtually as a group. This is helpful when face-to-face meetings are difficult due to geographic distances or time constraints.

PTO or PTA. A local parent teacher organization could offer a series of sessions using the courses and this Facilitator Guide.

Educators

Professional development. The courses can be used as a stand-alone professional development opportunity. Alternatively, blended learning or using the online course material along with group activities and discussions can be effective. Whether courses are viewed by groups together or by individuals independently, periodic follow-up with group sessions is recommended. Expecting participants to view the courses on their own time carries some risk. Participants may not have a chance to complete the course(s) before the group sessions. Participants may need incentives (e.g., financial, professional) to complete the course(s).

Hiring content experts and providing ongoing coaching. Schools or districts can train personnel in communication and conflict resolution skills by hiring a conflict resolution content expert to facilitate the group. In addition, providing personnel with opportunities to be observed trying out the new skills and receiving frequent feedback through coaching will maximize the likelihood of lasting change.

Faculty meetings. While specialists, such as art, music, physical education teachers or librarians, attend faculty meetings and are not generally part of IEP meetings, several of the courses would still be relevant because every faculty member must communicate effectively with parents and each other. Eliminating, for instance, Course 2, (lessons 2-4) and focusing instead on sections on building trust in Course 2, Lesson 1, or on listening and responding in Course 3, or on emotions in Course 4, offer applicability beyond the IEP meeting and build necessary staff skills.

Professional Learning Communities (PLC). Many schools or districts utilize PLCs for a variety of purposes. Sometimes PLCs are led by teachers or outside consultants. Many agencies have access to a variety of technologies, such as discussion boards and videoconferencing, to enhance content and facilitate communication between participants.

Special education personnel, principals and/or superintendents. Leaders can use the courses during regular staff meetings to support staff skill development and encourage practice and reflection. Leaders can also use the courses in leadership meetings/learning communities. Leaders may choose to focus on their own skill development and/or consider various ways to support the skill development of school personnel.

For Leadership Consideration:
- ❖ Could you incorporate the skills in the courses into your observation and feedback protocols?
- ❖ Could you build in staff incentives or incorporate the courses into your Action Plan for the year?
- ❖ Is your district or school a good candidate for a joint training with parents and educators? If so, consider co-facilitation with a parent leader who has facilitation experience.
- ❖ Consider recruiting or appointing a new teacher to be the facilitator, paired with a more experienced teacher, to gain experience. The Facilitator Guide is written for facilitators with and without experience in facilitation or conflict resolution expertise.

Professional associations. A professional association could embark on a study of the material in the *Working Together Series* over the course of a year or another particular time period during a portion of their regular professional association meetings. Another option would be to conduct sessions for their members during special professional development days. Speech language pathologists, school psychologists, and special education administrators are examples of members with professional associations whose work requires interacting regularly with parents, other educators and IEP Teams.

Paraprofessionals. Many paraprofessionals interact regularly with parents and are often the first to address their concerns. They can benefit tremendously from many of the skills for communication and conflict resolution introduced in Courses 1, 2 (lesson 1), 3, and 4. Providing a facilitated professional development opportunity for paraprofessionals offers one way to advance their career path.

Joint group activities with parents and educators. The courses have been designed for both parents and educators to show that the information presented is equally applicable to all and that using the skills as recommended will improve collaboration. A district or parent organization may decide to convene a group where both parents and educators participate or do a joint training event. Participants will increase their understanding of the different challenges experienced by parents and educators beyond the course material. We support this type of learning community and believe that good relationships can begin emerging during the learning process. However, we would strongly recommend that such groups be led by experienced facilitators. Managing a safe and welcoming environment that remains neutral requires strong facilitation skills.

This Facilitator Guide offers several helpful sections to support your facilitation. Each course section begins with the **Course Description**. The next section, **Big Picture Ideas**, lists the main ideas related to communication and dispute resolution that are covered in the course or lesson. Next is a list of **Course Resources** to learn more about the ideas presented in the courses. We have selected a few resources and offer brief descriptions for each. You may wish to check out several of the resources before your session and share them with your participants, perhaps by creating a handout or making them available to share.

Here are some general tips for facilitating your *Working Together* group sessions:

Plan thoroughly. Since one of your main jobs as facilitator is to keep the session flowing smoothly, knowing in advance how to run your session is important. We recommend that you view the course before you facilitate a session, even if the group will be working through lessons together.

Pre-test all technology. Technology can enhance a group's experience, however, if it is not working properly, it can undermine learning. Make sure you test all equipment to be used to show the courses. Also, most participants will have expectations of being able to use Wi-Fi for their computers and smart phones during the sessions. Note: For optimal use of the accessibility features, the courses should be viewed using Internet Explorer. If viewing courses individually, but in a group session, be sure to allot time for participants to create an account prior to viewing the first lesson.

Be clear about directions. Participants will be counting on you to explain the agenda for each session and effectively describe how the activities will be conducted. Sessions usually have time constraints. The clearer you are, the less time will be spent with additional explanations.

Be neutral. Set a tone in the sessions of welcoming all opinions and keeping the focus on participants working to develop their own understanding of the content. In addition, if your group consists of both educators and parents, it will be absolutely critical that you not only remain neutral, but help the participants frame their issues in non-judgmental ways. For instance, if an educator says that she has a difficult time dealing with angry parents, you could reframe the comment more generally by stating that it is very common for all of us to feel uncomfortable when someone is angry at us or expressing anger.

Assess your own comfort level in working with conflict while leading groups. Course material may bring up diverse and conflicting perspectives. Managing difficult discussions requires advanced facilitation skills. If you do not feel prepared to facilitate those conversations effectively, discuss with the group the boundaries and norms of

how to manage those conversations. As a facilitator, avoid agreeing or disagreeing with contentious points of view. Focus on the content, and remember participants can agree to disagree and still progress through the lessons.

Set community expectations with all participants in mind. When setting ground rules or expectations for your sessions, keep in mind that participants from different experiences and backgrounds may interpret ground rules differently. A good ground rule to add that can encourage participants to have a wider lens than their own background and experience is presuming positive intentions (Garmston & Wellman, 1999).

Create excitement about the material. Set a tone for each session that not only creates a safe and welcoming environment, but also creates excitement about the lessons to be learned. Think ahead about sharing a short story from your experience or the news that relates to the material for the day. Bring in positive quotes or funny cartoons to keep the conversation upbeat. Some facilitators find using pictures to represent ideas engages their participants.

Keep the energy moving. As facilitator, it is your job to keep the group's discussions and activities moving along.

A great way to do this is to have a list for yourself of probing questions. For instance:

- What did you notice?
- What was new to you?
- Do you see any patterns?
- Have you had a similar experience?
- How could you use this information right now?

Also, if you notice participants are tired or sluggish, invite participants to stand as they are able and take a short stretch break. Or, have them move around the room three times or other type of movement that is possible for your participants.

Be flexible. While planning is important, a good facilitator is also flexible. Facilitators take their cues from their participants. Sometimes it might become obvious, for instance, that the participants need more time than you anticipated on a topic. You might find it necessary to ask participants what changes should be made to the schedule and adjust accordingly.

Content-related ice breakers. Sometimes when a group does not know each other or needs to shift their attention from their regular day, a quick, non-intimidating content-related activity is helpful. This kind of activity can start to build the atmosphere of a learning community. Here are some samples:

❖ **Introduce your partner:** Ask the participants to divide into pairs and share with their partners a positive family-school interaction they experienced or observed and why they thought it was positive. Make sure each partner takes notes. Then ask everyone to introduce their partners to the group sharing the experience or observation of their partners.

❖ **Biggest challenge:** Your group may have opinions about how the IEP process works and how it doesn't work. It might be interesting for the participants to divide into pairs and discuss the following questions about the IEP process in general and the role of conflict. As a group, have the pairs share their answers.

- What do you think is the hardest challenge when trying to complete the IEP process?

- What do you think are the most common reasons why conflict occurs during the IEP process?

❖ **Note to self:** Hand out paper and an envelopes to participants. Have participants individually write a note to themselves about their ideas regarding conflict by addressing the following questions. Let them know that these notes are for themselves and will not be read by anyone else. Tell them to insert their notes into the envelopes and put their names on the envelopes. Collect the envelopes and tell the participants that you will hand their notes back to them at the end of all of the sessions. The idea here is to see whether or not their perspectives about conflict changed.

- What is my definition of conflict?

- What is my usual reaction to conflict – avoidance, giving in, compromising, arguing, standing firm, etc.

- When has conflict benefitted me?

- How much has conflict impacted my home-school relationships? My life?

- If I could change one thing about how I deal with conflict, what would it be?

Facilitate learning by doing. People learn best when they have an opportunity to try out things they have learned and then discuss their questions, successes and challenges. Although all strategies and activities outlined in this Guide should be considered suggestions, it is important to be consistent. The skill development process will take time—but it is worth it. The idea is to give participants plenty of opportunities to discuss, reflect, practice, review, and practice more. This may mean meeting several times to discuss and practice the strategies included in a course. If you ask participants to practice on their own away from the group, structure the assignment so each participant walks away with a clear idea of what skill(s) he or she will practice. During the next session, provide participants an opportunity to share their experiences with practicing the skill(s). This Guide refers to the skill-based practice set -up and debrief as the End of the Session Challenge (see pp. 32-33).

There are many ways to facilitate sharing in a structured, time-sensitive way. Here are some suggestions:

❖ **Poster discussion.** Designate places where participants can write on large paper or whiteboards in brief notes their experience as they are coming to the session. Put headers on each place, such as: Questions/Confusions; What Worked?; and What Didn't Work? Review what is written and ask the group to select one of the items for further discussion for a set amount of time.

❖ **Skill debrief.** Pick a particular skill that was discussed in the course and pose an open-ended question to participants for a set amount of time (10-15 minutes). Ask for examples of how they used the skill. For instance, after Course 2, you could ask, "Does anyone have any examples of how you intentionally showed personal regard to build trust this week and what happened?"

❖ **Journal jot and share.** As participants arrive, provide paper or notecards to participants and ask them to jot reflections of their experience with implementing the previous course skills and suggestions since the last session. To start the session, ask for two or three participants to share their experiences.

❖ **Open-ended question.** Start the session with an open-ended question such as, "We have 10 minutes, would anyone like to share any thoughts you've had since the last session?"

❖ **Volunteer observer and reporter.** Ask for volunteer observers for a subsequent session. Provide the volunteers with a focus for their observations as they are going about their day. Ask them to notice and jot down observations related to the course and then share them with the group at the next session. For instance, after Course 3, ask volunteers (perhaps a parent and a teacher) to notice and write down several examples of conversations where a person listened for understanding and where someone did not listen for understanding.

❖ **Journal.** Provide participants guided questions they can journal about between sessions. For example, you can ask them to journal about their experiences in implementing a new skill, such as active listening. When back in session, you can ask the participants if they wish to share any observations from their journals.

❖ **Paired sharing.** Have participants discuss with a partner for ten minutes (5 minutes per person) their experiences related to the course material presented at the previous session. You can also try structuring a sharing by having one person share and then have him or her ask for specific feedback from the other person. This type of sharing takes a little longer. For instance, parent participants share an example of when a conversation about their child got emotional and did not end up well. The parents then relate the strategies they tried to manage the difficult conversation and ask their partners for feedback on what seemed to work and what else could have been tried.

❖ **Note:** If an issue is raised by participants that requires more time and in-depth discussion, suggest that the issue be placed on the Parking Lot (see checklist on p. 22) and then figure out how to make time for this issue at a future session.

Blended learning. Viewing the online courses with group activities is a type of blended learning. When you design your sessions, it will be important to decide whether your participants will view the courses together or be required to do so on their own time. For busy educators and administrators, viewing the courses on their own time and using limited staff time or professional development time for discussion and supplemental activities might seem like a good idea. However, there is a risk for both busy parents and educators that they will not have time to view the courses. In that event, your group activities will not work as well, and your participants will not fully learn the material. We recommend, when possible, your participants view the courses together. However, the courses are created so that you can show just a portion of each course to meet your group's time availability. Also, breaking the information down into smaller bites is often a great way for participants to absorb the information more easily. See "Pre-test all technology" (p. 16) to review important points for viewing courses in group settings.

Designing your sessions. As mentioned earlier in Blended Learning, you will have to decide if your group will view the courses on their own time or together. If viewing together, your available technology and support will determine whether your group will view the courses on their own devices or on a big screen.

In addition, you may need to design more than one session per course. The activities suggested in this Guide, including ice breakers, reflective questions, learning by doing, and supplemental activities, are all suggestions to give you options to meet the needs of your participants. Each of the supplemental activities found in this guide uses a common facilitation technique. You may find that one of the activities used in a particular lesson really worked well with your participants. You can easily use the same technique with a different lesson.

We strongly suggest that you open the first session with the or a . Opening the Sessions activities include an opportunity to develop group norms for the sessions and distribute a handout explaining the courses.

Each course contains several points where the content pauses to ask participants reflective questions. Either after each reflective question, or after the course section is viewed, you may wish to facilitate a group sharing of answers to these reflective questions. If your participants are viewing the courses on their own and then coming together for discussion and activities, ask the participants to note the answers to their reflective questions on paper or electronically and bring them to the session for sharing.

Consider carefully the total amount of time allotted for your session and plan group activities accordingly. Novice facilitators may find that activities take longer than expected, particularly with engaged participants. It is important to maintain a balance between moving the agenda along and being flexible to adjust to the pacing needs of participants. There are two sample agendas included, one that allots time for the courses to be viewed together, and one that assumes courses will be viewed independently prior to the sessions .

Video projection, bring your own device, or paper. Many organizations may not be able to supply each participant with a device to view the courses individually during the sessions. Consider projecting the courses in video format for all the participants to view or asking participants to bring their own laptop or tablet to view the courses as you facilitate. If none of these options are possible, it will be helpful to distribute transcripts (paper copies) of the sections of the courses you will use during your facilitation.

Set-up for each session. We recommend the following checklist of tasks to do for each session.

☐ Have a whiteboard or large poster paper available with markers

☐ Post your name and preferred contact information in large clear writing

☐ Provide participants with name tags, pens and paper for answers to reflective questions and/or supplemental activities

☐ Create a Parking Lot – a blank piece of paper to note issues your group wants to return to at a future time (it will be your responsibility to return to these issues)

☐ Check your environment for comfortable seating and easy viewing, good air, free of distraction with good acoustics

☐ Set the stage by posting something inspirational (e.g., children's pictures, quotes), or words or simple phrases that relate to the Big Ideas for the session

☐ Have a variety of quiet "fidget and stress toys" (squishy balls, elastics, clay)

☐ Try out your technology ahead of time, especially any special accommodations participants may need

☐ Post Wi-Fi username/password information

☐ Have handouts and any other materials and resources ready

☐ Have water, possibly coffee/tea, and simple refreshments available

☐ Make sure to have each participant's contact information and send a reminder about the session

Sample Agenda 1

(Participants view course/partial course in group session)

Activity	Minutes	Notes
Welcome and Announcements	5	
Icebreaker	5-10	
Debrief on End of Session Challenge from last session	10-15	
Show Course or partial Course	30	
Supplemental Activity	15-20	Depends on size of group
Explain End of Session Challenge for next time	3-5	
Closing	2-5	
Estimated Course Time	**70-90**	

Sample Agenda 2

(Participants view courses prior to group session)

Activity	Minutes	Notes
Welcome and Announcements	5	
Icebreaker	5-10	
Debrief on End of Session Challenge from last session	10-15	
Supplemental Activity	15-20	Depends on size of group
Explain End of Session Challenge for next time	3-5	
Closing	2-5	
Estimated Course Time	**40-60**	

To Learn More…

Actions for the Rights of Children & United Nations High Commissioner on Refugees (2005). *Facilitator's toolkit*. Retrieved from http://www.unhcr.org/4371d7c92.pdf.

Brown, J. & Isaacs, D. (2005). *The world café: Shaping our futures through conversations that matter.* Oakland, CA: Berrett-Koehler Publishers.

Facilitator's tip sheet. Retrieved from Centers for Disease Control website: https://www.cdc.gov/phcommunities/docs/plan_facilitation_tip_sheet.doc.

Garmston, R. J. & Wellman, B. M. (1999). Developing collaborative norms. In *The adaptive school: A sourcebook for developing collaborative groups* (pp. 33-50). Norwood, MA: Christopher-Gordon Publishers, Inc.

Grochell, T., Jershov, D., & Orav, K. (2016). *Visual facilitation cookbook.* Estonia UNESCO Youth Association. Retrieved from: https://www.salto-youth.net/downloads/toolbox_tool_download-file-1430/VF-cookbook-web.pdf.

Hoffman, J. (2018). *Blended learning in practice*. Retrieved from The eLearning Guild website: https://www.elearningguild.com/insights/221/blended-learning-in-practice/.

Owen, H. (2008). *Open space technology: A user's guide* (3rd ed.). Oakland, CA: Berrett-Koehler Publishers.

Porteus, A., Howe, N. & Woon, T. Facilitating group discussions. Retrieved from Stanford University website: https://web.stanford.edu/group/resed/resed/staffresources/RM/training/facilguide.html.

Schwartz, R. (2002). *The skilled facilitator: A comprehensive resource for consultants, facilitators, managers, trainers and coaches*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.

Stanfield, R. B. & The Institute for Cultural Affairs (2013). *The art of focused conversation: 100 ways to access group wisdom in the workplace.* Gabriola Island, BC, CA: New Society Publishers.

Purpose: We suggest providing an introduction to the sessions prior to starting the content or viewing any of the courses. Let participants know what to expect, give them a chance to discuss their needs and challenges, and increase their engagement. If you choose to use one of the Content-related ice breakers (see pp. 18-19) instead of the paired listening activity listed below, we recommend that you follow this general outline for starting your sessions (introductions, developing norms and handout).

> **Set-up**:
>
> ❖ Complete the set-up recommended for every session (p . 22)
>
> ❖ Hand out blank paper and pens to each participant (you could use half sheet of regular paper, blank index cards, etc.)
>
> ❖ Give each participant the handout that describes the courses (Appendix A)
>
> ❖ Post the questions as described in the Paired Listening and Introductions activity (pp. 26-27). Have markers available for participants.
>
> ❖ Prepare your opening remarks or use the script provided below

Potential Facilitator Script:

Welcome to our first session of the Working Together Series. The courses in the series focus on using good communication and collaborative problem-solving skills in the IEP process. The goal is to learn a variety of practices that will help us build and maintain good working relationships so that our children in special education benefit from a well-functioning IEP Team.

My name is _____ and I am your facilitator. A word about me _____[Fill in one or two sentences about yourself. Why are you facilitating? Will you be also learning this material along with the other participants? Why are you excited about the *Series*?]

[State your commitment to the group.] *I am committed to making this a good learning experience for you. Please don't hesitate to contact me to let me know if you have any special needs or considerations and any feedback you think may be helpful. My contact information is posted here* [Refer to posted contact information.]

[Share practical information with the group (e.g., parking, bathroom locations, locked doors, policies for food or drink).]

[Invite everyone to take a minute to look at the *Series* description.] *There are 5 courses available online. During our time together, we* **will** **[Describe what your group will be doing – viewing all of the courses together? Will you be focusing on a particular course and why? Explain if your group will be part of an existing parent training, educator staff meeting or collaboration time, professional development days, etc.? Will there be opportunities to discuss each of the lessons and do several activities together?]** *The courses can also be taken or reviewed by you again outside of our meetings at your own pace.* **[Review briefly the content of the five courses.]**

Participant Introductions:

Introductions start to build connections among the participants, particularly if they do not know each other well. You might want to set the tone for the group and introduce participants to sharing with each other through a non-threatening a content-related ice breaker (see Content-related ice breakers on pp. 18-19). You may want to include a warm-up activity at the beginning of each session. If participants do know each other well, you might start to build their Learning Community by asking them to share what experience they have in learning about communication and dispute resolution skills. Move through this activity quickly, especially if you are facilitating a large group.

Activity 1: Paired Listening and Introductions:
Suggested time: 20-30 minutes depending upon group size

Purpose: To build connections among the participants and provide opportunities to discuss initial thoughts, questions, or concerns about the sessions.

> **Set-up**:
>
> ❖ Divide group into pairs, or one set of three if the group doesn't divide evenly.
>
> ❖ Put the following three questions on poster paper where participants can see the questions

Instructions: Ask the pairs to discuss the questions below. Let them know that you will time their discussion, giving each person five minutes to share their thoughts on

each question. After five minutes, instruct pairs to switch speakers. Let the pairs know that when all sharing is finished, you will ask each person to introduce his or her partner by name, role (in the case of an educator) or child's age/grade/school (in the case of a parent), and one thing they said in response to Question 2. Following all introductions, ask the group to call out (or what is known as "popcorn") what they are looking forward to, as well as any questions or concerns they had in response to Question 1 so you can address them as a large group.

Question 1: What are you looking forward to in these sessions? Any questions or concerns?

Question 2: What do you think you could learn from the courses that would help you right now with any challenges you might have with the IEP process? Give examples.

Activity 2: Setting Group Norms or Ground Rules
Suggested time: 10 minutes

Purpose: To discuss and establish group behaviors that will contribute to a safe and welcoming environment.

Set-up:

❖ Put up poster paper

❖ Write the agreed upon group behaviors on poster paper and post them during each session

Instructions: Ask for suggestions from the group about what they think will make them comfortable during the sessions or make the sessions run well. You might make a suggestion, such as, "everyone has a chance to speak." Be careful with rules like "no side chatter." You don't want to stifle all excitement and reactions -- remember you want to keep people interested and curious. A better guideline might be, "Don't go overboard with side chatter." On poster paper, write the suggested guidelines offered by the participants and, with buy-in from the group, add ones you think are important for your particular group. Post this list each session.

Activity 3: Closing
Suggested time: 2-3 minutes

Thank everyone, ask if there are any announcements, and remind the group about the next session and any preparation you are requesting.

Course Description: This course provides an introduction to the series and covers information about why it's so important for family members and educators to continually develop skills to work together and through conflict to support students with disabilities. The rest of the *Working Together Series* builds upon concepts introduced in this course.

Big Picture Ideas:

❖ Family participation and collaborative problem solving helps children achieve more.

❖ Families may not participate for valid and understandable reasons.

❖ Trusting relationships are built through respect, personal regard, integrity and transparency.

❖ Effective communicators notice and are curious about different cultural backgrounds.

❖ Conflict is normal and can be useful.

❖ Resolving conflicts as early as possible helps preserve long-term

Potential Challenges:

❖ Participants may understand why some families don't participate in meetings, but may not see anything they can do to increase their participation.

❖ School personnel may set limits on family participation by encouraging mandatory attendance at meetings but not providing genuine opportunity for shared decision making.

❖ Introduction of trust-building strategies of respect, personal regard, integrity and transparency is a lot of information. Depending on the time scheduled for session and participants, you may need to divide the course into parts and do smaller segments over a longer period of time.

❖ Participants may be required to question long-standing beliefs or behaviors which they may or may not ready to do publicly.

Activity 1: Head, Heart, Feet
Suggested time: 10-15 minutes

Purpose: Gives participants a chance to reflect and share their takeaways with each other. *This activity can be used to supplement any lesson*.

Set-up:

❖ Complete the set-up recommended for every session (p . 22)

❖ Post three large pieces of paper around the room (or divide three areas on blackboard/whiteboard). Draw a head on top of one, labeling it "Idea." On the second one, draw a heart and label it "Feeling." Finally, on the third, draw a foot and label it "Action."

❖ Provide sticky notes and pens/markers for participants

Instructions: Let participants know they will have about 5 minutes to write their notes. Instruct participates to write a new **idea** they now have as a result of viewing the *Introduction to the Working Together Series* on one sticky note and place it on the head. Have them write on a second sticky note a new **feeling** they experienced while watching the course and place it on the heart. Have them identify a new **action** they could try before the next session on another sticky note and place it on the foot paper. After the notes have been placed, give participants about 5-10 minutes to look at all the sticky notes. Encourage participants to comment to each other as they review the notes. The action picked by each participant could form the basis of the End of Session Challenge described later in this section.

Activity 2: Reflection – What Are Your Ideas about Conflict?
Suggested time: 15-20 minutes

Purpose: Examines assumptions about whether conflict is good or bad and provides an opportunity for participants to reflect on how conflict could be managed for a positive benefit. *This activity can be used to supplement any lesson*.

Set-up:

❖ Complete the set-up recommended for every session (p. 22)

❖ Provide everyone with the quote and reflection questions

❖ Divide group into pairs

Instructions: Read the quote aloud. Invite the participants to think about their perceptions and experiences about conflict and discuss with their partners the questions below. Let them know they will have 10 minutes. Bring the group back together and have participants share a few responses to the questions for about 5-10 minutes.

I should like to ask you to agree for the moment to think of conflict as neither good or bad; to consider it without ethical prejudgment; to think of it not as warfare, but as the appearance of difference, difference of opinions, of interests. For that is what conflict means – difference… As conflict is here in the world, as we cannot avoid it, we should, I think use it. Instead of condemning it, we should set it to work for us.

Mary Parker Follett, *Constructive Conflict*, 1925

Note about quotes and participants' home or background. The suggested quotes included in this Guide relate to a lesson or entire course, however, they are just suggestions. The quotes were chosen because they align with the lesson/course content and are somewhat universal in nature. However, given the geographic location, age, culture, or other characteristics of your participants, feel free to pick alternative quotes you think would have greater relevance.

Questions:

❖ What is your initial reaction to the quote?

❖ What is your view or experience with conflict? Is it helpful or harmful?

❖ Does your background or culture view conflict in a particular way and guide you in how you handle conflict?

❖ Have you had any experience where conflict ended up being useful?

Activity 3: End of Session Challenge
Suggested time: 15-20 minutes

Purpose: To encourage and help structure opportunities for participants to practice new skills learned in all of the courses and reflect on their experiences. This promotes change of behavior and practices, and in some cases, can change policy as well. *Strongly encouraged to be used at the end of every session.*

Set-up:

❖ Complete the set-up recommended for every session (p. 22)

❖ The set-up depends upon what type of structured opportunity for practicing skills (see pp. 19-20) you wish to provide

Instructions: At the end of each session, ask participants to select a new action/skill/ strategy they want to practice or try before the next session. As discussed in the Facilitation section under "Facilitate learning by doing" (see pp. 19-20), it is important to provide participants with a structure to practice the skills they just learned. Help participants identify what skill(s) they will practice between sessions. They may want to consider the following factors when deciding (greatest need for improvement, most meaningful to them in the immediate future, easy opportunity to practice skill). The group may want to practice the same skill, or independently select the skill(s) they would like to practice.

Have participants discuss how they think they will practice their skill(s) and what they might need to do to prepare/ensure that they practice. Encourage participants to jot down their plans to practice. Participants may want to put reminders in their calendars or devices and/or communicate with a partner between sessions.

Let participants know that you will be asking volunteers at the beginning of the next session to reflect on their experiences. You can use the bulleted questions provided every time or modify them. You may want to encourage other participants to brainstorm additional strategies or solutions to some of the challenges that were experienced and shared.

<u>Begin your next session</u> with volunteers sharing what action or new skill they tried and reporting how it went:

❖ Did it feel good/awkward?

❖ What worked well?

❖ What didn't work? What barriers made implementation challenging?

❖ What would you do differently?

> What worked well?
> What didn't work?

Activity 4: Closing
Suggested time: 2-5 minutes

Every session should end with a closing. Typical closings are quick and involve announcements for next time and, perhaps, a summary of expectations. Share any resources you think would be helpful. You can also choose to leave participants with an inspirational or encouraging thought, quote, cartoon or story that relates to the content of the material for the day. Sessions should always end on a positive note!

Course 1 Resources	Descriptions
Epstein, J. L. & Associates (2019). *School, family, and community partnership: Your handbook for action (4th ed.).* Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin Press. National Network of Partnership Schools website: http://nnps.jhucsos.com/publications-products/	Includes over 75 ideas to improve school programs of family and community engagement and to sharpen district and organization leadership on partnership program development. Extensive website with many publications and national network.
Georgia Department of Education (2018). *Georgia Department of Education C.A.F.E. Model for authentic stakeholder engagement*. Retrieved from https://www.gadoe.org/Curriculum-Instruction-and-Assessment/Special-Education-Services/Documents/Parent%20Mentor%20Info/PDF.C.A.F.E.Guide.Final.Edit.Feb.6.2018.pdf.	Provides a step-by-step guide to GaDOE's stakeholder model to support students, particularly those with disabilities and/or at risk challenges, with blended initiatives both in and out of the classroom. Includes strategies, tools and resources leading to effective stakeholder teams. Guidance for the C.A.F.E. work comes from the methodology and guidance of the IDEA Partnership, a national collaborative of educators and administrators, national health and education organizations and nonprofits, and family members.
Hedeen, T., Moses, P., & Peters, M. (2011, July). *Encouraging meaningful parent-educator collaboration: A recent review of literature.* Retrieved from https://www.cadreworks.org/sites/default/files/resources/EncouragingMeaningfulCollaborationJULY2011_0.pdf.	Synthesizes findings from a number of academic studies and policy publications. Among the highlights is the idea that involvement may be too narrow a term to encapsulate the range and depth of partnerships that support students' success.
Kalyanpur, M. & Harry, B. (2012). *Cultural reciprocity in special Education*. Baltimore, MD: Brookes Publishing.	Gives educators a framework for cultural reciprocity—a process that helps professionals and families examine their own values, respect each other's differences, and collaborate.

CADRE

Course 1 Resources	Descriptions
SEDL in collaboration with the US Department of Education (2013). *Partners education in a dual capacity-building framework for family–school partnerships.* Retrieved from https://www2.ed.gov/documents/family-community/partners-education.pdf. Additional dual capacity-building framework resources: https://www2.ed.gov/documents/family-community/frameworks-resources.pdf	Explains the US Department of Education's Dual Capacity Building Framework for Family-School Partnership.
Weeks, D. (1994). *The eight essential steps to conflict resolution: Preserving relationships at home, at work and in the community.* Los Angeles, CA: J.P. Tarcher.	Provides conflict resolution guidance to help turn conflict into lasting partnerships and obtain positive outcomes.

Course Description: This course provides strategies to help family members and educators work together and through conflict. A number of strategies are framed around steps that can be taken before, during, and after the IEP meeting.

Lesson 1: Behaviors That Create Better Family and School Relationships

Big Picture Ideas:

❖ Trust is at the heart of positive working relationships.

❖ When people trust each other, they show that they care about each other (personal regard).

❖ When people trust each other, they feel valued and heard (respect).

❖ When people trust each other, they have the information they need to make decisions (transparency).

❖ When people trust each other, they believe they can depend on each other (integrity).

❖ There are a number of ways in which family members and educators can show personal regard, respect, transparency, and integrity.

❖ There are strategies that can be used to develop trusting relationships with people from different cultures. Everyone can benefit from the implementation of these strategies.

❖ Blaming or bringing up the past repeatedly, minimizing a person's opinion, or allowing too little time for discussions, can get in the way of developing and maintaining positive relationships.

❖ A neutral third party may be needed to resolve issues and rebuild relationships.

Potential Challenges:

❖ There is a significant amount of content included within this lesson. Participants may find it difficult to remember and apply the number of strategies suggested in this lesson in a variety of settings without additional activities, discussions, and practice. Participants may also want to focus their learning and go deeper on some topics (e.g., cultural awareness and responsiveness). Participants may find it helpful to break this lesson into several sessions.

❖ Some IEP Team members may think the strategies to build trust sound good but are impractical.

❖ Participants may find it easier to identify instances where someone else did not behave in a way to build their trust, but they may have a more difficult time identifying how they could improve their own behaviors to build trust.

Lesson 2: Before IEP Meetings

Big Picture Ideas:

❖ Productive and well-managed IEP meetings are encouraging and motivating.

❖ Before an IEP meeting:

- Be informed

- Schedule meetings with plenty of advanced notice

- Use pre-meetings to go over information or discuss disagreements

- Consider requesting a facilitated IEP meeting if you anticipate a difficult IEP meeting

- Prepare and share relevant reports with all IEP Team members

Potential Challenges:

❖ Family members may be overwhelmed by too much information and the opinions of too many staff members to adequately prepare for meetings.

❖ Educators and parents may have serious time challenges that pose barriers to using pre-meetings, adequately distributing information, and taking the time to explain information to IEP Team members before the meeting.

Lesson 3: During IEP Meetings

Big Picture Ideas:

- ❖ The school leader can put IEP Team members at ease by creating a welcoming environment.

- ❖ Being flexible and open to other people's ideas are key strategies to positive and productive IEP meetings.

- ❖ Keep the focus on the child.

- ❖ Use collaborative problem-solving skills, such as asking open-ended questions, and listening for understanding.

Potential Challenges:

- ❖ Participants may find it difficult to be open to other people's ideas. This can interfere with their motivation to try any collaborative problem-solving strategies.

- ❖ Time constraints on IEP meetings can prevent IEP Team members from using collaborative problem-solving strategies.

- ❖ Participants may have a difficult time seeing how spending the time to collaborate effectively can save time and frustration later.

Lesson 4: After IEP Meetings

Big Picture Ideas:

❖ Use key strategies to encourage positive outcomes and avoid unnecessary disputes after the IEP meeting:

- Debrief after a meeting as a team or one-on-one

- Provide copies of the final IEP to all team members

- Follow through on commitments and use Action Plans

- Address non-IEP issues

- Continue to communicate

❖ If necessary, IEP Teams can meet more than once per year.

Potential Challenges:

❖ Educators may not have an effective way to track commitments included on Action Plans that work for them.

❖ Parents may not have an organization system that works for them.

Activity 1: Discussion about Pollack article on trust
Suggested time: 15 minutes

Purpose: Introduces participants to the role appearance bias plays in developing trust. Offers an opportunity for participants to discuss biases and the role they play in developing trust, and strategies that can be used to counter biases. *This activity supplements Lesson 1.*

Set-up:

❖ Complete the set-up recommended for every session (p . 22)

❖ Provide a copy of the Pollack article (see Appendix B) to each participant. Article retrieved from: https://www.mediate.com//articles/pollackpbl20180222.cfm.

❖ If your group is large, you can break participants into smaller groups to discuss and then popcorn or share a few thoughts from each group when you come back together

Instructions: Hand out article to each participant. Using the guiding questions below, facilitate a discussion about strategies for building trust outlined in the course and the role that bias plays in trust.

❖ What is your initial reaction to the appearance bias science experiment?

❖ If we all make judgments based upon appearance, how can our bias interfere with building trust?

❖ In Course 1, we discussed the many barriers that parents and educators have in fully participating in the IEP process. In addition to appearance, our role of parent or educator can also create biases. What assumptions do you think are commonly made about parents or educators that might be barriers to building trust?

❖ Out of the four strategies outlined in the course to build trust (personal regard, respect, transparency, integrity), what strategies are best used to counteract appearance or role bias and why?

❖ Brainstorm as many actions as possible that IEP Team members could take to build trust and counteract appearance or role bias.

Activity 2: Checklist activity
Suggested time: 10-15 minutes

Purpose: Helps clarify what it means for to be an informed participant and helps participants generate a checklist to prepare for their next meeting. *This activity supplements Lesson 2.*

Set-up:

❖ Complete the set-up recommended for every session <u>(p . 22)</u>

❖ Have paper and pens available for participants to make their checklists or encourage them to use their devices

❖ Put up poster paper and have markers to generate group checklist (optional)

Instructions: Ask participants to break into pairs and let them know they will have 10 minutes for their discussion. Ask them to discuss what they think it means for them to become informed participants in an IEP meeting. Ask them to generate a checklist (each keeping notes so they can take the checklist with them) of what to do next time to be prepared for an IEP meeting. If your group is composed of both parents and educators, the checklists will be different. If you have time, you can bring participants back together and generate a checklist together with all of their ideas. In addition, you can choose to reproduce the checklist and give it to them after the session.

Activity 3: Reflection: Being Open-minded
Suggested time: 10-15 minutes

Purpose: Inspires people to be open-minded. Offers an opportunity to discuss the challenges with being open-minded and staying true to one's values. *This activity supplements Lesson 3.*

Set-up:

❖ Complete the set-up recommended for every session

❖ Provide everyone with quote and questions through handouts, devices, posting or projecting

❖ Divide group into pairs

Instructions: Read the quote aloud. Ask the participants to discuss with each other the following questions and let them know they have 10 minutes. If time permits, bring the pairs together as a group and have participants share a few points they discussed.

Your assumptions are your windows on the world. Scrub them off every once in a while, or the light won't come in.

Isaac Asimov

❖ What does this quote mean to you? How does Dr. Asimov's words relate to the key strategies used to create a welcoming environment in an IEP Team meeting?

❖ Everyone finds it challenging at times to be open to others and their statements. Can you think about times when you are challenged to be open-minded and why?

❖ Do your values conflict with being open-minded under certain circumstances? Can you identify ways you can be flexible and open to other people's ideas while at the same time being true to your values?

Activity 4: New News or Old News?
Suggested time: 20 minutes

Purpose: Helps participants apply what they just learned by examining how IEP Teams function in their schools and determining what behaviors need to change in order to improve services to students. *This activity can supplement any lesson in Course 2 or the entire course.*

Set-up:

❖ Complete the set-up recommended for every session

❖ Divide the participants into groups of three participants or modify depending on the number in your group

❖ Ask groups to designate one person to be a note-taker and one to be a reporter

❖ Give each group two pieces of poster paper and markers and write New News on the top of one and Old News on the top of the other

❖ If the Course is viewed independently prior to session, make sure participants have access to the transcript for Course 2

Instructions: Ask participants to think about specific IEP Teams they have been a part of, and identify concrete ways their teams could change (New News) that would improve effectiveness. Ask them to reflect about the old ways that should be left behind (Old News). Let the participants know this activity requires them to be specific and asks them to bring in lessons learned so far from the courses covered. Tell participants there will be 15 minutes for this activity, and you'll let them know when they have 5 minutes remaining.

Here are several examples of specific changes:

❖ Instead of "Listen to parents," write, "Whenever a parent shares an observation about a child, team members respond with questions until the parent lets us know that he or she feels understood."

❖ Instead of "Use pre-meetings," write, "Our school should share evaluation reports with parents before meetings and ask if they want a pre-meeting to go over information."

❖ Instead of "Stop complaining," write, "When I don't feel the team is respecting me, ask for a specific change. For example, I could say, "I would like more time to discuss my reactions to this evaluation report."

While the groups are brainstorming their lists, you should roam around the room. Coach groups on how to be more specific.

When time is up, ask the reporters from each group to post their Old News and New News on the wall and review each suggestion without discussion. Have each group leave their posters up as a subsequent group reports out. After all groups report, ask the participants to call out, or popcorn out, any themes they noticed.

Activity 5: Closing
Suggested time: 2-5 minutes

Consider an End of Challenge Session (see pp. 32-33). Wrap up the session with any details about the next session. Consider a quick inspirational take-away or note of encouragement.

Course 2 Resources	Descriptions
CADRE CADRE (2014). *Steps to success.* Retrieved from https://www.cadreworks.org/resources/cadre-materials/steps-success-communicating-your-childs-school.	Offers specific communication skills that may be helpful to parents as they develop and maintain partnerships with schools. Available in 13 different languages.
CADRE CADRE (2017). *Educational advocates: A guide for parents*. Retrieved from https://www.cadreworks.org/resources/cadre-materials/educational-advocates-guide-parents.	Assists parents in: • Asking interview questions that will help get an understanding of an advocate's approach to providing support • Connecting with parent centers in their state • Connecting with additional sources of information about advocacy Available in English and Spanish.
CADRE CADRE website. *Guide to facilitation programs.* https://www.cadreworks.org/facilitation-programs	Provides best practices and examples for states and LEA interested in developing or improving a Facilitated IEP (FIEP) system. This online resource includes example forms, guiding documents, suggestions for system design and improvement, voices from the field, and much more.
Martin, N. (2005). *A guide to collaboration for IEP teams.* Baltimore, MD: Paul H. Brookes Publishing Co.	Provides a guide to managing IEP meetings that will help administrators, teachers, resource professionals, and parents work as a unified team. This resource addresses effective meeting management, principled negotiation, the role of emotions, and conflict prevention and resolution.
CADRE Peters, M. (Rev. 2009). *Effective IEP meetings: Tested tips*. Retrieved from https://www.cadreworks.org/resources/cadre-materials/iep-tested-tips.	Includes tips for IEP conveners (pre-meeting, during meeting and post-meeting). Also includes suggestions for parents to help them prepare for an IEP meeting.

Course 2 Resources	Descriptions
CADRE Reiman, J.W., Beck, L., Coppola, T., & Engiles, A. (2010, April). *Parents' experiences with the IEP process: Considerations for improving practice.* Retrieved from https://www.cadreworks.org/resources/literature-article/parents-experiences-iep-process-considerations-improving-practice.	Reviews literature exploring findings from 10 studies published after 2004 that focus on the experiences and perceptions of parents or other caregivers related to the IEP process. The review also highlights recommendations from this body of literature for improving the experiences of parents and encouraging their participation in IEP meetings.

Course Description: This course focuses on listening and responding skills, with emphasis on listening for understanding, possibly the most important skill set needed for parents and educators working together to support students.

Lesson 1: Listening

Big Picture Ideas:

❖ Listening is a 5-step process:

- Hearing

- Listening for understanding

- Listening without judgment

- Remembering the assigned meaning

- Interpreting

❖ Keep an open and curious mind.

❖ Listen for what is behind the message.

❖ Listen without judgment to what is said, how it is said, and non-verbal messages.

Potential Challenges:

❖ Participants may be more familiar with not feeling listened to rather than critically examining their own listening behaviors.

❖ Participants may be frustrated by the amount of time and how many steps a good listening process takes.

❖ Participants may believe that they don't have control over some steps and will not be able to develop this skill. For example, they may believe that they are easily distracted and can't keep their focus for any length of time.

Lesson 2: Responding

Big Picture Ideas:

❖ Reflective listening is a powerful strategy.

❖ Asking open-ended questions shows the speaker you are interested and can help clarify the message.

❖ Using silence strategically allows the speaker to be heard and valued. It also gives the listener time to form responses.

❖ Behaviors to avoid include:

- Interrupting

- Challenging someone's message

- Trying to fix the situation or problem solve

Potential Challenges:

❖ Participants may feel uncomfortable practicing this skill set in front of the group.

❖ When participants are trying reflective listening, they may forget to ask clarifying questions and just summarize what they think a speaker is saying.

❖ Participants may ask loaded or pointed questions instead of open-ended questions designed to learn more.

❖ Participants may finish the speaker's sentences with a solution, or attempt to fix the problem, rather than ask follow-up questions to hear the whole answer from the speaker.

❖ Participants may have difficulty applying this skill to real-life situations if they are passionate about an issue and other emotions surface.

Activity 1: Reflection: What is important about listening?
Suggested time: 15-20 minutes

Purpose: Provides an opportunity for participants to reflect on the importance of listening and to share their ideas with each other. *This activity supplements Lesson 1.*

Set-up:

❖ Complete the set-up recommended for every session

❖ Provide everyone with quotes and questions through handouts, devices, posting or projecting

❖ Ask for a volunteer note-taker for each group

Instructions: Divide participants into groups of not more than six people and assign a quote to each group. Ask for a volunteer to keep a few notes about key points the group makes as they have their discussion. Let the groups know they will have 10-15 minutes for their discussion. Ask them to read their quote aloud in their group and then have a general discussion using the following questions as prompts for their discussion. After the discussion is finished, have the note-taker share with the whole group a few key points from their discussion.

❖ What is your initial reaction to the quote? What does the quote and the strategies for listening outlined in the course say about why listening is important?

❖ What impact does listening have on a speaker? When can listening transform a relationship and how does it do that?

Quote 1: *I remind myself every morning: Nothing I say this day will teach me anything. So if I'm going to learn, I must do it by listening.*

Larry King

Quote 2: *Too often we underestimate the power of a touch, a smile, a kind word, a listening ear, or the smallest act of caring, all of which have the power to turn a life around.*

Leo Buscaglia

Activity 2: Bad Behavior Role Play
Suggested time: 20 minutes

Purpose: Demonstrates behaviors that should be avoided when responding to someone who is talking to you. Offers an opportunity for participants to reflect and discuss their observations. *This activity supplements Lesson 2.*

Set-up:

❖ Complete the set-up recommended for every session (p. 22)

❖ Place three chairs in front of room or in the center of a large circle (make a space for wheelchair or other equipment used by those with mobility challenges)

❖ Make scenario available to participants through handout, projection, sharing on devices, etc.

❖ Ask for a volunteer storyteller and note-taker who will post list of behaviors to avoid

Instructions: This activity calls for lightening rounds of role-playing bad listening behaviors. Ask for a volunteer to tell a story of some event that was important and had meaning for the speaker. The speaker will sit in one of the chairs at the front of the room or middle of the large circle. Instruct the audience to think of examples of poor listening behaviors, and ask two volunteers to start by sitting in the listening chairs at the front or center of the room. The two volunteers will listen to the speaker and each will demonstrate one poor listening behavior. Ask the group to name the bad behaviors as they notice them so the note-taker can record the behaviors to share later. Explain that the listeners will move out of their chairs once their behaviors are guessed and another volunteer from the group should rotate in to demonstrate a different behavior. The listeners keep rotating in until a pre-determined number of behaviors (10-20) are reached. At the end, the note-taker will read the entire list of behaviors to avoid. Process the activity with the group with follow-up questions.

❖ Which behaviors bothered you the most when speaking?

❖ Which behaviors bothered you the most when you were trying to listen to someone in a group setting?

❖ How have these kinds of behaviors negatively impacted home-school relationships?

❖ What behaviors have you exhibited that could interfere with listening?

❖ What strategies can help someone reduce behaviors that interfere with listening?

Activity 3: Listen to My Story
Suggested time: 30 minutes

Set-up:

❖ Complete the set-up recommended for every session (p . 22)

❖ Display the first three steps of the listening process (hearing, listening for understanding, and listening without judgment) and two strategies suggested for responding (asking open-ended questions and reflective listening to check for understanding) by projecting, on poster paper, etc.

❖ Ask participants to break into pairs and have them designate one person as a storyteller and one person as a listener. Have them switch roles after the first round

❖ Variation: you can plan for as many rounds as you have time for, including having the participants switch partners

Purpose: Provides participants an opportunity to practice listening and responding and receive feedback from different people. *This activity can supplement any lesson in the course.*

Instructions: Tell the participants that the storyteller will be sharing about a difficult conversation they have had. The listener will be practicing some of the listening and responding skills outlined in the course. At the end, the storyteller will give the listener feedback about whether or not they felt heard and understood by the listener. After one round, participants will switch roles.

Ask the participants to think quietly for a moment about a difficult conversation they have had in the past. Remind them that the conversation does not need to be very personal as they will be sharing the conversation with each other. Ask them to jot a

few notes to themselves that will help summarize the gist of the conversation in three or four points. Tell the participants not to worry about sharing all of the details because their partner will be asking questions.

Tell the listeners that they will be practicing the first three steps of listening which are hearing the storyteller, listening for understanding, and listening without judgment. The listeners will ask open-ended questions and use reflective listening to check for understanding. Let participants know they will have 10 minutes to tell the story and practice listening and responding skills.

After the practice is completed, have the storytellers give the listeners feedback using the following guiding questions:

❖ Did you think the listener heard your story and understood it? How did you know?

❖ What strategies did you notice the listener used?

❖ Is there anything more that the listener might try next time in responding?

Switch roles and repeat.

Activity 4: A Tale of Two Conversations (for Course 3)
Suggested time: 20-25 minutes

Purpose: These short video clips show two attempts at a conversation: one with poor behaviors and the other with good listening behaviors. *This activity can supplement any lesson in the course.*

Set-up:

❖ Complete the set-up recommended for every session

❖ Provide participants with *A Tale of Two Conversations* handout (optional)

❖ Internet, laptop (with updated Adobe Flash) and projector

Instructions: View "A Tale of Two Conversations" Take One: https://www.cadreworks.org/sites/default/files/cadre/flashtours/Listening1wcapout.html.

This video shows a parent and an administrator discussing the parent's request for a change in speech therapy for her son. Instruct the group to watch what each person does and says and notice the effect on the conversation.

Ask the group to respond to the following question:

❖ What behaviors did you notice in this video?

❖ How might their relationship be impacted?

View "A Tale of Two Conversations" Take Two: https://www.cadreworks.org/sites/default/files/cadre/flashtours/Tale2wcapout.html.

This video shows the same discussion with a different approach and outcome. Instruct the group to once again watch what each person does and says and notice the effect on the conversation.

Ask the group to respond to the following questions:

❖ What behaviors did you notice in this second video?

❖ How might their relationship be impacted by these behaviors? How does this compare to the previous version?

❖ Keeping the focus on the other person is a key element in listening effectively. What might be most challenging for you, in keeping the focus on the other person, when you're experiencing strong emotion or have a point you want to make?

❖ How do you know when someone listening to you truly understands what's important to you?

> **Activity 5: StoryCorps**
> *Suggested time: 20 minutes*

Purpose: Gives participants an opportunity to practice listening and responding skills outside of the session. *This activity can supplement any lesson in the course.*

Set-up:

❖ Complete the set-up recommended for every session (p . 22)

❖ Requires all participants to have smartphone or tablet (IOS or Android) capable of downloading StoryCorps app

❖ Project website resources, or have participants use their own devices, or pass out two handouts, Getting Started and Interview Tips from the website: https://storycorps.org/participate/storycorps-app/

Instructions: Explain StoryCorps (sees StoryCorps website: www.storycorps.org) and its mission to preserve and share humanity's stories to build connections between people and create a more just and compassionate world. Assist participants in downloading StoryCorps app and review the two handouts. Ask participants to interview someone they know between now and the next session using the recording capability of the app. Review the Question Generator on the app (it gives participants many suggested questions for different types of interviews). When interviewing, encourage participants to use the listening and responding skills outlined in this course. Explain that the app can be used to record an interview. It is the participant's choice to upload it to the StoryCorps' archives. Tell participants that at the next session they can share their experiences.

Activity 6: Closing
Suggested time: 2-5 minutes

Consider End of Session Challenge (see pp. 32-33). Wrap up the session with any details about the next session. Consider a quick inspirational take-away or note of encouragement.

Course 3 Resources	Descriptions
Nichols, M.P. (2009). *The lost art of listening*. New York, NY: Guilford Press.	This book provides practical suggestions about how to use good listening to improve all relationships, professional and personal, and behaviors to avoid.
On being: The Civil Conversations Project (http://www.civilconversationsproject.org/). Better conversations: A starter guide. Retrieved from https://static1.squarespace.com/static/52e04689e4b06ba19ad5a957/t/5a7e16f60852291995133e8b/1518212854325/onbeing_ccp_guide_09February2018.pdf.	This project was created by Krista Tippett, founder and CEO of On Being, a non-profit public life and media initiative. This publication contains guidelines and resources on effective listening and responding.
StoryCorps (https://storycorps.org/about/)	StoryCorps is a non-profit dedicated to the sharing, collecting and preservation of people's stories. They've launched a new initiative, One Small Step, focused on promoting civil conversations.
Ueland, B. (1993), *Strength to your sword-arm: Selected writings.* Duluth, MN: Holy Cow! Press. Excerpt available, http://physics.uwyo.edu/~ddale/research/REU/2016/Tell_Me_More.pdf.	This essay highlights the impact of listening in changing people's lives.
Zenger, J. and Folkman, J. (2016, July 14). *What great listeners actually do.* Retrieved from https://hbr.org/2016/07/what-great-listeners-actually-do.	This article from Harvard Business Review describes data analyzed from approximately 3,500 people in a program designed to make managers better coaches. It also provides practical suggestions.

Course Description: This course focuses on key strategies to help educators and families manage and respond to some of the intense emotions that can arise when working together to support students.

Lesson 1: Understanding and Managing Your Own Emotions

Big Picture Ideas:

❖ How we experience emotions depends upon our personality, background, experiences and culture.

❖ Strong emotions can interfere with good relationships.

❖ Strong emotions are important because they can signal perceived threats, tell us what is important to us, when someone violates our values, and when more information and support is needed.

❖ Strategies to manage our own emotions include:

- Practice self-care

- Become self-aware and understand your triggers

- Take time to understand your feelings

- Use strategies that work for you

Potential challenges:

❖ Participants may have different levels of ability to recognize their emotions and understand the impact they have on their lives and their relationships.

❖ Participants may view understanding and managing their emotions as "touchy-feely" skills and believe there are benefits to not developing these skills (e.g., others fear them when they lash out in anger).

❖ Participants may think managing their emotions doesn't matter if the people they are interacting with don't also manage their emotions.

❖ Some participants may find it difficult to talk about their emotions, whereas others will express their emotions freely.

❖ Some might see this session as an opportunity to share their grievances or difficulties to gain group support/sympathy.

Lesson 2: Responding to Others' Emotions

Big Picture Ideas:

❖ Everyone's participation is important.

❖ Value the emotions someone brings to the team.

❖ Creating an emotionally-safe space is important.

❖ Strategies to respond to others' emotions include:

- Observe without judging

- Identify emotions and check for agreement

- Ask questions to gain understanding

- Focus on important information learned

- Respond with care

Potential Challenges:

❖ Different personalities, backgrounds, and cultures can create barriers and may affect how verbal and nonverbal cues are interpreted.

❖ Some participants may be uncomfortable responding to strong emotions.

Activity 1: Stress Busters
Suggested time: 15 minutes

Purpose: Gives participants a chance to discuss the impact that time pressures have on their lives, including their ability to practice and implement the new skills they have been learning. Also gives participants an opportunity to share self-care ideas. *This activity can supplement either lesson in the course.*

Set-up:

❖ Complete the set-up recommended for every session

❖ Put up poster paper and draw a number line from 1 to 10. At the 1, write "No Time" and at the 10 write "Plenty of Time."

❖ Hand out sticky notes

❖ Ask for a volunteer to make a list of the self-care stress busters generated by the group on separate poster paper

Instructions: Ask the participants to think for a few minutes about the responsibilities in their life. Ask them to write responsibilities on the sticky notes (one per note) and place their sticky note on the scale where they think that responsibility falls in terms of having enough time to complete. Once everyone has had a chance to place their top responsibilities on the chart, encourage a discussion about their observations about time pressures and stress. Follow with a discussion about ways they reduce stress. Brainstorm together, as long as time allows, a list of stress busters, including ones that take very little time, energy and resources. The note-taker will record this list for the group.

Activity 2: Role Plays
Suggested time: 20 minutes

Purpose: Gives participants a chance to practice managing and responding to emotions. *This activity can supplement either lesson in the course.*

Set-up:

❖ Complete the set-up recommended for every session

❖ Arrange chairs in a horseshoe with two chairs at the front of the room

❖ Provide a role-play scenario to each of the two volunteers (Appendix D)

❖ Project or post the strategies in Lesson 2 to respond to others' emotions: observe without judging, identify emotions and check for agreement, ask questions to gain understanding, focus on important information learned, respond with care

A note about role plays: Role plays can be tricky because people are often nervous about trying skills out in front of others. Creating a non-threatening atmosphere is important. Encouraging participants to "get it wrong" and joking about the scenarios before you begin helps break the ice. You might try modeling by starting off the role play in one of the roles and then letting the volunteer step in. Always ask for volunteers and never assign someone a role. If you think the participants are not comfortable role-playing in front of a large-group, you can have the participants practice the different roles with one other person, and then when finished have them process the activity with their partner or as a larger group.

Instructions: Give the role players a few minutes to read their role carefully. Suggest that they make notes in the margins or circle things they think are important. Let the role players know how much time they will have for the conversation; 5 minutes is generally sufficient. Set the scene by telling the group that the scenario involves a dispute between a parent and a teenager over cell phone use.

Direct the group's attention to the strategies for responding to others' emotions and suggest the volunteers pick one or two of those strategies to practice while doing the role play. Ask the rest of the group to observe. When time is up, thank the role players and facilitate a discussion with the rest of the group using the following guiding questions. If you have time, do a second round using the same scenario.

❖ What strong emotions did each person show during the role play?

❖ What were some of the underlying reasons for your partner's emotions?

❖ How did each person try to manage his or her own emotions?

❖ How did each person respond to the other person's emotions?

<u>Role Play 1: Parent and Teen Scenario</u>: *This scenario involves a parent and a teenager and a disagreement over cell phone use. The parent starts the conversation.*

<u>Role Play 2</u>**:** <u>Roommate Scenario</u>: *This scenario involves two roommates who are upset with each other. They need to have a conversation to figure out what's wrong and reduce the tension in the apartment. Roommate 2 starts the conversation.*

<u>Role Play 3: Principal/Parent Scenario</u>: *A parent of a special needs student is upset because the IEP doesn't include transportation as a related service and her son has difficulties on the bus.*

<u>Activity 3: Closing</u>
Suggested time: 3-5 minutes

Consider <u>End of Challenge Session (see pp. 32-33)</u>. Wrap up the session with any details about the next session. Consider a quick inspirational take-away or note of encouragement.

Course 4 Resources	Descriptions
CADRE CADRE webinar (2015, Dec.). *Using trauma-sensitive strategies to support family engagement and effective collaboration*. https://www.cadreworks.org/resources/cadre-materials/using-trauma-sensitive-strategies-support-family-engagement-and-effective	Introduces the essential elements of a trauma-sensitive school and specific strategies for improving family engagement and effective collaboration.
CADRE CADRE webinar (2016, Sept.). *Nature vs. nurture: Our brain's response to conflict.* https://www.cadreworks.org/resources/cadre-materials-family-members/nature-vs-nurture-our-brain%E2%80%99s-responses-conflict	Shows ways to interpret responses to anxiety and conflict, and examines research and techniques that help people have the conversation they want, even in the midst of high anxiety and conflict.
CADRE CADRE webinar (2018, July). *Productive Conversations through Empathy.* https://www.cadreworks.org/events/productive-conversations-through-empathy	Provides strategies to help people support others through difficult moments, demonstrate authentic compassion, or connect through kindness without owning the beliefs, issues, or problems of others.
CADRE CADRE webinar (2019, January). *Self-care Strategies for Families with Students with Disabilities.* https://www.cadreworks.org/events/self-care-strategies-families-children-disabilities	Encourages redefining what self-care means for the parent of a child with disabilities. This webinar explores the obstacles that often sabotage our own self-care and ways we can overcome them.
David, S. (2016). *Emotional agility: Get unstuck, embrace change, and thrive in work and life*. New Hyde Park, NY: Avery Publishing Group.	Provides strategies to help people navigate their inner world—their thoughts, feelings, and self-talk that drives their actions, careers, relationships, happiness, and health.
Kosmoski, G. J. & Pollack, D. R. (2005). *Managing difficult, frustrating, and hostile conversations: Strategies for savvy Administrators* (2nd ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin Press.	Contains many case studies and an extensive bibliography that can help administrators effectively prepare for and manage stressful and/or sensitive situations. This is a companion book to one for teachers.

Course 4 Resources	Descriptions
Rosenberg, M.B. (2015). Nonviolent *communication: A language of life* (3rd Ed.). Encinitas, CA: PuddleDancer Press.	Shares a compassionate approach to communicating—both speaking and listening—that can de-escalate situations and improve relationships.
Shapiro, D. (2017). *Negotiating the non-negotiable: How to resolve your most emotionally charged conflicts.* New York, NY: Penguin Books.	Harvard Program on Negotiation Director, Daniel Shapiro, introduces a method to bridge tough divides and reveals the power of identity in fueling conflict.
Stone, D., Patton, B., & Heen, S. (2010). *Difficult conversations: How to discuss what matters most* (Rev. ed.). New York, NY: Penguin Group.	Provides an approach to having tough conversations that includes: deciphering the underlying structure of every difficult conversation; starting a conversation without defensiveness; listening for the meaning of what is not said; staying balanced in the face of attacks and accusations; moving from emotion to productive problem solving.

Course 5: Focusing on Interests to Reach Agreement

Course Description: Families and educators can use a collaborative approach to work through disagreement by focusing on interests. This course provides a number of strategies to help everyone focus on interests to reach agreement.

Lesson 1: Focusing on Interests

Big Picture Ideas:

❖ Collaborative approaches can help the IEP Team have a better meeting, preserve long-term relationships, and effectively manage disagreement.

❖ Collaborative approaches consider everyone's needs, especially the child's.

❖ Competition works in baseball with a winner and loser, but competition can create tension and harm group dynamics.

❖ Focusing on interests rather than positions can help teams reach agreement.

❖ Positions are demands, what someone wants, or a single solution.

❖ Interests are what someone needs. They are the *why* behind the position.

❖ People often respond to positions defensively.

❖ Asking open-ended or probing questions and observing gestures or facial expressions helps identify interests.

❖ Verbal and non-verbal communication can be influenced by one's background and culture.

❖ Before a meeting, be prepared to share your own interests.

Potential Challenges:

❖ Participants may be focused on real disagreements between schools and parents that seem to have no possibility of agreement.

❖ Participants may feel that focusing on interests rather than strongly advocating for their position is weak and not living up to their responsibilities to advocate for their child or their school.

❖ Participants may feel uncomfortable because of their job position, personality, culture and/or background in sharing their hopes, desires and fears.

Lesson 2: Building Agreements through Consensus

Big Picture Ideas:

❖ Building agreements when there are competing interests is difficult.

❖ Federal law requires IEP Teams to try to make joint decisions.

❖ Using consensus to reach agreements allows IEP Teams to make joint informed decisions.

❖ Consensus decision-making considers the interests of each of the IEP Team members.

❖ Consensus is when all people on the IEP Team agree to *support* the decision, even if they may not wholeheartedly agree with everything related to the decision.

❖ Strategies to building agreements include: using interests to frame the problem; brainstorming ideas; making contingency agreements; building agreements around common interests; using agreed upon criteria to make decisions; responding to emotions empathetically; using a mediator or facilitator when needed; and focusing on the child.

❖ Barriers to agreements include interpersonal issues, competing positions, emotional blocks, and impasse.

Potential Challenges:

❖ If participants have never tried consensus-building, they may have a difficult time understanding it or think it is a waste of time.

❖ Schools may have staffing and financial constraints that are hidden interests but cannot legally consider or discuss them.

❖ Participants may fear that a contingency agreement may be the final decision, even if the solution in the agreement doesn't work.

❖ Participants may think compromising, or splitting the difference, is the best way to reach agreement rather than through consensus which addresses all interests.

Activity 1: Hypotheticals
Suggested time: 15-20 minutes

Purpose: Hypotheticals are good ways for people to use the information they just learned and apply it to a realistic situation. They can prompt discussion with the whole group or allow participants in small groups to have greater participation in a rich discussion. Sharing each group's summary with the whole group continues to engage participants and increases their learning. *This activity can supplement either lesson in the course.*

Set-up:

❖ Complete the set-up recommended for every session (p . 22)

❖ Divide class into workgroups of 3-5 people per group

❖ Provide paper and pens for each group or their own devices to take notes

❖ Have poster paper and markers

❖ Provide a copy of the Hypothetical to each participant (Appendix E)

❖ Ask for a reporter from each group to report to the larger class the group's answers to the discussion questions

Instructions: Let participants know that this is a hypothetical situation that involves a tenant's association and the issue of noise. The tenants are having a meeting to discuss revision of their rules regarding noise and that their job will be to identify the different interests for each tenant, behaviors that got in the way, and strategies that the President could use to build agreement about new rules. Tell the participants that they should break into groups of three to five and take a few minutes to read through the scenario. After reading, ask the groups to address the questions listed in the hypothetical for 15 minutes. A reporter for each group will need to write down the characters from the hypothetical and the interests of each character as identified by the group. The reporter should also record the identified behaviors that got in the way of the tenants reaching an agreement. The reporter will share the group's responses with the whole group. Give a 5-minute warning before time is up. Then have each group report out the interests and behaviors of each character. To save time, rotate among the groups so each character is reported out only once.

Each group will respond to the following directions and questions (these are also included on the Appendix E: Hypothetical handout):

❖ List all the neighbors attending the meeting. For each neighbor, identify his or her positions.

❖ For each neighbor, identify his or her interests. Identify not only interests that may have been mentioned in the hypothetical, but also any hidden ones you think might be possible.

❖ Were there any behaviors that were obstacles to reaching agreement?

❖ Is there any strategy that Janet could have used to help the neighbors reach any agreement?

Facilitator Discussion Guide for Hypothetical: While groups are working, you can wander around and ask prompting questions if you see a group is getting stuck. The following are the issues that the groups should identify. If they miss anything, try asking a question at the end of the reporting to prompt additional answers. The groups may also think of issues that are not listed below.

Janet Falcone: President of Association

Positions: Change rules of association based on what she thinks is best – no noise after 9:00 p.m., no parties on the green or outside the units, and no loud music

Interests: Tired of receiving complaining phone calls and is frustrated

Obstacles: Proposed solution without seeking input, interrupts discussion, and calls for vote prematurely

John, Julie, Yuchen: Students who live in different units

Positions: Oppose the President's proposal, want restricted hours on the playground

Interests: Want to make noise after 9:00 p.m. because they don't get home from school or work until after 9:00 p.m.; want to feel welcomed at the association

Obstacles: Interpersonal issues – believe that association is trying to drive out students by changing noise rules; competing interests – need noise rules that work for their lives because they have different hours as students than other residents

Mrs. Ramirez: Senior citizen who was widowed last year

Positions: Wants restrictions on playground hours

Interests: Wants to enjoy sitting on benches in circle while visiting with friends and be able to hear them speak; is lonely

Obstacles: Judgmental of parents, thinks they are failing to discipline their children properly which is why they scream on the playground; competing interests – to enjoy playground but children need to enjoy playground too

Mr. Plante: Safety inspector who lives next door to Mrs. Ramirez and works long hours at demanding work that requires consistent and quality sleep

Positions: Agrees that playground hours should be restricted, agrees with Janet that 9:00 p.m. should be the cut-off for noise

Interests: Needs a good night's sleep to avoid making mistakes at work and keep his stress down

Obstacles: Interpersonal and competing interests – he has had it with Mrs. Ramirez because she doesn't change her volume even though he has asked and he isn't sympathetic to her being hard-of-hearing

Mrs. Aja: Association member for twenty years who recently had her car broken into

Positions: Wants members screened in the future before purchasing or renting units

Interests: Wants to feel safe because she feels the neighborhood is going downhill because the quality of people living in it has changed for the worse

Obstacles: Demanded screening

Ginny Jacobs: Lawyer who lives in one of the units

Positions: None

Interests: Wants to be helpful and use her skills to help the association

Obstacles: None

After the groups have had a chance to answer the questions, ask each group to report out what they discussed. Ask each subsequent group to just note items from their notes that have not already been discussed. If they disagree with anything another group reported, ask them to explain why.

Activity 2: A Tale of Two Conversations for Course 5
Suggested Time: 20-25 minutes

Purpose: These short video clips show two attempts at a conversation: one with poor behaviors and the other highlighting listening behaviors and focusing on interests skills. *This activity can supplement any lesson in the course.*

Set-up:

❖ Complete the set-up recommended for every session (p . 22)

❖ Provide participants with *A Tale of Two Conversations* handout (Appendix F) (optional)

❖ Internet, laptop (with updated Adobe Flash) and projector

Instructions: View "*A Tale of Two Conversations*" Take One: https://www.cadreworks.org/sites/default/files/cadre/flashtours/Listening1wcapout.html.

This video shows a parent and an administrator discussing the parent's request for a change in speech therapy for her son. Instruct the group to watch what each person does and says and notice the effect on the conversation.

Ask the group to respond to the following question:

❖ What positions did you see expressed in this video?

View "*A Tale of Two Conversations*" Take Two: https://www.cadreworks.org/sites/default/files/cadre/flashtours/Tale2wcapout.html.

This video shows the same discussion with a different approach and outcome. Instruct the group to once again watch what each person does and says and notice the effect on the conversation.

Ask the group to respond to the following prompts or questions (Reminder: Interests are the needs, desires, concerns or fears that motivate people to take a certain position or make a demand):

❖ Identify two underlying interests of the administrator in this situation.

❖ Identify two interests of the parent that motivate the requests she makes.

❖ Identify two interests shared by the administrator and the parent.

Additional Questions:

❖ What enabled the administrator and parent to find common ground and develop solutions that responded to mutual interests?

❖ How can the parent and the administrator ensure that an idea they both 'love', is in the child's best interest?

Activity 3: Reflection - What are Your Ideas about Conflict?
Suggested time: 15-20 minutes

Purpose: Helps participants examine assumptions about whether conflict is good or bad and begin to reflect on how conflict could be managed for a positive benefit. *This activity can be used to supplement any lesson.*

Set-up:

❖ Complete the set-up recommended for every session

❖ Provide everyone with quote and questions through handouts, devices, posting or projecting

❖ Divide group into pairs

Instructions: Read the quote aloud. Invite the participants to think about the quote and discuss with their partner why teamwork may lead to better results. Let them know they will have 10 minutes. Bring the group back together and have participants share a few responses to the questions for about 5-10 minutes.

Teamwork is the ability to work together toward a common vision. The ability to direct individual accomplishments toward organizational objectives. It is the fuel that allows common people to attain uncommon results.

Andrew Carnegie

❖ Do you believe that teams make better decisions than individual leaders? Explain.

❖ Which do you think is a better process for deciding what services and supports to include in an IEP – an IEP Team voting, a district representative deciding, or reaching consensus? Explain your reason and what are the pros and cons for each of those options?

❖ What are the best strategies for you as a team member to use to help the IEP Team reach consensus?

Activity 4: Closing
Suggested time: 3-5 minutes

Consider . Wrap up the session with any details about the next session. Consider a quick inspirational take-away or note of encouragement.

Course 5 Resources	Descriptions
Briggs, B. (2012). *Introduction to consensus* (rev. by Monica Krebs). Author.	Using consensus decision making when facilitating groups for over 25 years throughout the world, Briggs explains consensus and provides a step-by-step guide to reaching consensus. Also available in Spanish, *Introduccíon al Proceso de Consenso.*
CADRE CADRE Flash video (n.d.). *Understanding positions and interests*. https://www.cadreworks.org/resources/ understanding-positions-and-interests- video	Introduces the differences between positions and interests and provides specific examples.
CADRE CADRE 3 part webinar series (2014, Aug.). *Inclusive listening*. https://www.cadreworks.org/resources/ cadre-materials-family-members/ inclusive-listening-building- understanding-supporting	Introduces participants to the concepts and strategies of Inclusive Listening. Series was designed for facilitators and mediators but also a great resource for others who want to advance their skill set.
Consensus Building Institute https://www.cbi.org/	Organization that works globally to use consensus to solve difficult problems. Website has many free resources and news about consensus building activities all over the world.
Fischer, R., Ury, W., and Patton, B. (2011). *Getting to yes: Negotiating agreement without giving in*. (3rd Ed.) New York: Penguin Books.	Provides a method for principled negotiation in order to reach agreement without jeopardizing business relations.
Hartnett, T. (2011). *Consensus oriented decision making.* Gabriola Island, BC, CA: New Society Publishers.	Includes step-by-step explanation of how to build consensus.
Ruiz, D. M. (1997). *The four agreements: A practical guide to personal freedom.*	Mr. Ruiz, born in Mexico, comes from a long line of Toltec practitioners. Many groups have used the four agreements to guide their interactions with each other and his books have been translated into 40 languages.

Appendix A: *Working Together* Course Descriptions

Course 1: Introduction to the *Working Together Series*. This course provides an introduction to the series and provides information about why it's so important for family members and educators to continually develop skills to work together and through conflict to support students with disabilities. The other courses in the series build on concepts that are introduced within this course.

Course 2: IEP Meetings and Beyond. This course provides strategies to help family members and educators work together and through conflict. A number of strategies are framed around steps that can be taken before, during, and after the IEP meeting.

Lesson 1: Behaviors that Create Better Family-School Relationships. This lesson focuses on the strategies that help build and maintain trusting relationships. It also covers behaviors that can get in the way.

Lesson 2: Before the IEP Meeting. This lesson provides strategies for family members and educators to consider before the IEP meeting takes place.

Lesson 3: During the IEP Meeting. This lesson includes several strategies family members and educators can use during the IEP meeting.

Lesson 4: After the IEP Meeting. There is more work to be done following the IEP meeting. This lesson provides strategies to keep the collaboration between family members and educators outside of the IEP meeting.

Course 3: Listening and Responding Skills. This course emphasizes listening for understanding skills, possibly the most important skill set needed for parents and educators working together to support students.

Lesson 1: Listening. This lesson centers on the steps involved in the listening process, with emphasis on listening for understanding.

Lesson 2: Responding. This lesson focuses on a few key strategies family members and educators can use to respond appropriately to a speaker.

Course 4: Managing and Responding to Emotions. This course focuses on key strategies to help educators and families manage and respond to some of the intense emotions that can arise when working together to support students.

Lesson 1: Understanding and Managing Your Own Emotions. This lesson focuses on key strategies family members and educators can use to help them understand and manage their own emotions.

Lesson 2: Responding to Others' Emotions. This lesson discusses the impact

emotions have on the IEP process and provides some strategies to help create an emotionally safe meeting space and how to respond to other's emotions.

Course 5: Focusing on Interests to Reach Agreement. Families and educators can use a collaborative approach to working through disagreement by focusing on interests. This course provides a number of strategies to help everyone focus on interests to reach agreement.

Lesson 1: Focusing on Interests. This lesson covers a cooperative approach to working through disagreement, one that focuses on interests.

Lesson 2: Building Agreement Through Consensus. This lesson provides a number of strategies educators and families can use to build agreement through consensus.

You Look Like Someone I Can Trust!

February 2018

PGP Mediation Blog by Phyllis G. Pollack

When our mother was alive, she used to tell the story that about six weeks after my eldest sister was born, my mother boarded a crowded war time train with my sister in her arms to meet my father then stationed in Nebraska in the Army. Suddenly realizing she had left the diaper bag with her mother who was standing on the platform, she handed my sister to a stranger to hold, got off the train to grab the diaper bag from her mother, got back on and retrieved my sister from the stranger. In retrospect, she was horrified at what she had done: handing my sister to a stranger to look after for a few minutes, never thinking that something might happen to my sister in those few moments.

It seems that my mother was not alone in trusting strangers. In a January 29, 2018 post entitled, *This Is Why You Trust Some Strangers and Not Others*, Brandon Specktor, Senior Writer at LiveScience.com, notes that researchers have found that our ability to trust strangers depends on how much they resemble others that we know to be trustworthy or not so trustworthy. In short, it is an "appearance" bias that operates like the Pavlovian response we all learned about in school. If a stranger even minimally resembles someone we do not trust, we will unconsciously not trust the stranger even though we know nothing about her.

To reach this conclusion, Oriel Feldman Hall, an assistant professor in Brown University's Department of Cognitive, Linguistic and Psychological Sciences, conducted a study with her colleagues in which they recruited 91 participants to play a computerized trust game:

> *The participants were given $10 to invest with three potential "partners, ' each of whom was represented by a different headshot on a computer screen. Any money invested with a partner was automatically quadrupled (a $2.50 investment with any partner would yield a $10 return, for example), at which point the partner could either split the profit with the player or keep it all.*

> *As each participant discovered, one partner was always highly trustworthy (split the profits 93 percent of the time), one was somewhat trustworthy (reciprocated 60 percent of the time) and one was untrustworthy (reciprocated 7 percent of the time). Over several rounds of play, the participants quickly learned which partners could be trusted and which could not, the researchers said.*

After being conditioned with these trustworthy and untrustworthy faces, each participant played a second game with a new group of potential investment partners. Unbeknownst to the players, many of the new faces they saw were morphed versions of their same partners from the initial game. When the players were again asked to pick an investment partner, they consistently chose the faces that most closely resembled the trustworthy partner from the previous game and rejected the faces that most resembled the untrustworthy partner.

Based on this experiment, the researchers concluded that we make decisions about whether we can trust a stranger solely based on whether they look like someone we know and trust or someone we know and distrust. This is so, even though we have no direct or indirect information about the person before asking them to do us a favor and "watch" our stuff while we are waiting at an airport gate to board a plane and want to go to the restroom or grab a coffee. As the article concludes, it seems that our past experiences embedded deep into our unconscious guides the choices we make in the future; to trust someone we do not even know to watch "our stuff" or in my mother's case, my older sister.

A moment's reflection will reveal that this "appearance" bias plays out in resolving disputes. If the other side resembles someone from our past that we deemed trustworthy, no doubt the matter will be more easily settled. In contrast, if the other side reminds us of a "scoundrel" from our past, we will unwittingly and unconsciously, not trust a word she says, making any settlement more difficult. In sum, appearances do matter, in more ways than we realize!

Just something to think about.

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Listening and Responding Skills: This Study Guide focuses on the behaviors and statements illustrated in the second video. Review each Illustration and consider the Question for Reflection under each Topic. The purpose of this Study Guide is to help viewers consider ways to make their own interactions more constructive.

Illustration from Video: The administrator asked the mother if there were any other concerns she would like to share about her son.

❖ Keeping the focus on the other person is a key element in listening effectively. What might be most challenging for you, in keeping the focus on the other person, when you're experiencing strong emotion or have a point you want to make?

Illustration from Video: The administrator, through her words and body language, showed that she understood the mother's fear about her son being isolated and her hope for his being able to interact meaningfully with his peers.

❖ How do you know when someone listening to you truly understands what's important to you?

Role Play 1: Parent and Teen Scenario:

Parent Role:

Your child is in 10th grade and has had a cell phone since 9th grade. When you agreed to let your child have a cell phone, you discussed guidelines and he/she agreed to them. The child agreed to not use the cell phone at the dinner table, to not play on the cell phone when homework is supposed to be done, and to not be on the cell phone at night. You have discovered from your child's teacher that your child has been secretly texting in class. You have also noticed that your child is having a harder time getting up in the morning and you suspect that he/she is using the cell phone at night instead of going to sleep. You actually hate cell phones and find texting annoying. You would rather talk on the phone than text, but you realize you are more accessible to your family through texting. You are really concerned that your child will become one of those people who aren't capable of having a face-to-face conversation. Lately, you've had so much tension with your child that you don't want to make things worse. You fear that if you set a bunch of rules and punish your child, it will result in a huge explosion. You shared your concerns with a friend who suggested that you try having conversations with your child to reduce tension between the two of you. During this activity, try to manage your emotions, listen for understanding, and respond to your child's emotions in a way that shows you care. You think there should probably be a consequence for breaking the rules, but what you really want is a new agreement that addresses your concerns. **You begin the conversation.**

Role Play 1: Parent and Teen Scenario:

<u>Teen Role:</u>

You are in 10th grade. You got your first cell phone last year and most of your friends had already had their cell phones for at least two years. You are still mad that you had to wait so long; it made you feel humiliated in front of your friends. You and your friends talk to each other all the time via text. You also have a Snapchat account and like to share pictures and mini-videos with your friends about funny things you or others are doing. You love music and often feel calmed by putting in your ear buds and listening to some of your favorite tunes, especially at night when you are trying to go to sleep. You often feel pretty anxious at night about all the stressors you have with school, friends, and your parent. You know you waste a lot of time playing games on your phone when you should be doing your homework, but everybody does that, so what's the big deal? You are still getting good enough grades. You are much better than many of your friends because you don't text at the dinner table and turn your phone off, so you won't be tempted. You like to text your friends at night when you are alone in your room. You have been fighting with your parent quite a bit lately, but sometimes there are so many rules that seem ridiculous and it just stresses you out. You wish you could just be left alone to manage your life. Still, you're tired of fighting with your parent and you don't want stress at home, too. Today you got in trouble for using your cell phone in class. Your teacher spoke with your parent and now your parent wants to talk about your cellphone use. You are afraid you'll be grounded from your cell phone. Your goal is to not get grounded. **Your parent begins the conversation.**

Role Play 2: Roommate Scenario:

Roommate 1 Role:

You and your friend found this apartment together about three months ago. You have never lived with your friend, but you have been friends for about five years. You have always had a lot of fun together and thought living together was a great idea. When you moved in, you both decided that you would just trade-off buying groceries so you both could use whatever food was in the kitchen and not have to have a budget. However, you notice that your friend rarely goes to buy any groceries, particularly any milk, which seems to get used up every few days because he/she drinks a lot of milk. You let it go for a while because everything else seemed like it was going well and you didn't want to cause a fight. Now, however, you are feeling really resentful. Seems like every time you get up in the morning there is no milk for your cereal. You go to the refrigerator expecting to find food you bought and it is gone. You feel taken advantage of and this is affecting your friendship. You thought this roommate situation was going to be great and comfortable, but it is turning into the tension-filled opposite. You find yourself not wanting to hang out with your friend as much. You want your friend to buy groceries regularly and share the costs more evenly. You want your relationship with your friend to improve. You think you should probably have a conversation with your friend. Your friend isn't happy with the current arrangement either and says, "We need to talk tonight." Try to manage your emotions, listen for understanding, and respond to your friend's emotions in a way that shows you care. **Other roommate begins the conversation.**

Role Play 2: Roommate Scenario:

<u>Roommate 2 Role:</u>

You and your friend found this apartment together about three months ago. You have never lived with your friend, but you have been friends for about five years. You have always had a lot of fun together and thought living together was a great idea. Before you moved in together, you told your roommate that you hated a dirty apartment, particularly a dirty bathroom. You, however, have ended up doing most of the cleaning. While your roommate cleans up his/her own dirty dishes, he/she has only cleaned the toilet once! If you don't do it, it is disgusting. You are angry because when you come home from work tired, you end up having to pick up all of your roommate's stuff in the living before you can sit down and relax. You think your roommate is taking advantage of you and just assumes you will do the cleaning. You thought this roommate situation was going to be great, but it is turning out to be just like living with your last roommate before moving in here. Your old roommate used to leave their dirty clothes all over the apartment. You want your new roommate to do his/her fair share of the cleaning. You decide to let your roommate know that you've had enough. Before you leave for work you tell your roommate, "We need to talk tonight." You have a hard time managing your emotions and listening to others when you're this frustrated. When the time arrives to talk, **you begin**.

Role Play 3: Principal/Parent Scenario:

Parent Role:

Your six year old son, Thomas, has an IEP and is on the autism spectrum. He has some trouble communicating with his peers, but in general, is a bright child who does well in school. One of his characteristics is that he has a few repetitive behaviors of rocking and flapping his hands, particularly when he is stressed. He rides the bus every day to and from school and has no trouble getting on and off the bus. You are upset, however, because as the school year has progressed, he is getting picked on by the other students on the bus. They are making fun of him and imitating his rocking and hand-flapping. Thomas didn't tell you he was being bullied but you have noticed that he is upset each day when you meet him at the bus. It is now to the point where it is difficult to get him to get on the bus. You asked another parent whether or not her daughter noticed anything while riding the bus. She told her mother about the bullying. You are incredibly upset. Although Thomas has always enjoyed school, you have always been afraid of him being treated poorly. You immediately call the principal and schedule a meeting. You are particularly upset because during the last IEP Team meeting, you asked for Thomas to take a separate special needs bus but the team decided against this. They stated that Thomas functions well on the regular bus and that it was better for him to be with his peers. **You start the conversation**.

Role Play 3: Principal/Parent Scenario:

Principal Role:

Your administrative assistant scheduled you to meet with a concerned parent about his/her son, Thomas, a six year old boy with autism. You don't know this parent very well but you do remember meeting him/her during the IEP meeting. He/she seemed pleasant but was disappointed because the team did not agree to all of the proposed services to support Thomas. Although you're committed to meeting the needs of individual students, you were very relieved because you are under enormous pressure this year by your school board to reduce education costs. Your costs are on average at least 20% more than other similar districts around the state and country. You believe this is justified because you are serving a large percentage of children who received free and reduced lunch and speak English as a second language. You also know that federal requirements do not allow financial concerns to be considered in decisions about needed special education services. Although you have explained all of this to the school board, they continue to pressure you to reduce educational costs. You know Thomas and have always found him to be a pleasant, smart and agreeable child who functions well with his peers and doesn't make any trouble. Your main goal this year is to be very creative with what your students and teachers need so you can meet your overall budget demands, and still support students. Your spouse has been concerned about you because you have been so stressed that you are not sleeping well. **The parent starts the conversation.**

Association Meeting:

Pleasant Valley Tenant's Association is having its annual meeting this evening at its Community Room. Tensions between neighbors have been building for several years over noise and are now at their peak. There are about 50 condominiums that are part of the association. There are larger and smaller units all built around a circle that contains a playground and benches for sitting. On the outer side of the buildings is parking. Residents include families, students, young professionals and senior citizens. Some own, some rent. The neighborhood is relatively safe, but recently there have been several car break-ins. On the agenda this evening is a discussion about noise and a proposal to revise the noise rules.

Currently, the noise rules say that all homeowners should be considerate of their neighbors. The town's noise ordinance says, "Quiet hours are between 10 p.m. and 8 a.m. every day. Unreasonable noise is prohibited and punishable by a $200 fine." The President, Janet Falcone, is tired of receiving phone calls from residents complaining about noise. She often tells callers to call the police. Janet will propose a change to the association's noise rule to say, "All residents will be quiet after 9:00 p.m. No parties will be allowed on the playground green or outside of units. Playing loud music is prohibited." She starts the discussion with her proposal.

Immediately, three students, John, Julie and Yuchen, who live in different units say they think being quiet after 9:00 p.m., especially on weekends, is ridiculous. They often don't get home from school or work until after 9:00 p.m. and want to unwind, play some music and visit with each other. John likes to relax with a few beers, and thinks the Association President and other residents are secretly targeting the students and want to drive them out of the neighborhood. The students point out that the kids on the playground scream all day long and they can't get their homework done. They want restrictions on hours for the playground. Some senior citizens agree.

With so many families moving in with young children, some seniors don't feel like they can enjoy the benches in the circle. Mrs. Ramirez, a retiree, shares that she enjoys talking to a few of the kids, but there are so many kids now and their parents seem to just let them scream at the top of their lungs for hours, she can't sit with a friend and carry on a conversation. She thinks that parents don't properly discipline their children these days and that so many things in the world are going downhill. She has been particularly upset since her husband died last year. The conversation turns to Mrs. Ramirez's neighbor, Mr. Plante, who speaks up and says he can't hear his television at night because Mrs. Ramirez is always blasting her television or music at high volume. He has asked her numerous times in the past nicely to please turn down her television and music, and he tells her she should get hearing aids. Mr. Plante agrees with

President Janet that 9:00 p.m. should be the cutoff for noise. Mr. Plante works long hours at a plant nearby doing safety compliance for automobile switches. He is usually exhausted when he gets home and is stressed that he will make a mistake at work if he can't sleep.

Janet feels the discussion is getting out of hand and off track. She interrupts and tries to call for a vote on her initial proposal. Everyone objects. Mrs. Aja says that her car was broken into last week and thinks the association needs to be able to screen members before they can occupy a unit. She has lived at the association for twenty years and thinks the quality of the people living there is going downhill. She wants something done about who lives here and who gets to visit. She lives alone and is worried for her safety. Several people are visibly uncomfortable with this comment. John points out that it would be illegal to restrict the occupancy of a unit. Another neighbor, Ginny Jacobs says she is a lawyer and could investigate changing the association bylaws to require screening. Mr. Hill, another senior citizen, says that screening residents might restrict the number of families with small children moving into the neighborhood and perhaps that is a good idea. At this point, everyone starts speaking loudly and the President is forced to adjourn the meeting.

Focusing on Interests to Reach Agreement: This Study Guide focuses on the behaviors and statements illustrated in the second video. Review each Illustration and consider the Question for Reflection under each Topic. The purpose of this Study Guide is to help viewers consider ways to make their own interactions more constructive.

<u>Understanding Underlying Interests</u>

Reminder: Interests are the needs, desires, concerns or fears that motivate people to take a certain position or make a demand.

1. Identify two underlying interests of the administrator in this situation.

2. Identify two interests of the parent that motivate the requests she makes.

3. Identify two interests shared by the administrator and the parent.

<u>Building Solutions Based on Interests</u>

Illustration from video: The parent suggested that the speech therapist could work with other students, as well as Coby. The administrator acknowledged that instead of working only with Coby, the whole class could become involved by incorporating games.

❖ What enabled the administrator and parent to find common ground and develop solutions that responded to mutual interests?

Illustration from video: The parent said, "I love that idea. I think that's the kind of thing we can make some progress on." Both nodded affirmatively.

❖ How can the parent and the administrator ensure that an idea they both "love," is in the child's best interest?