



# How do I know what questions to ask?

There is an old saying, "Seek first to understand and then be understood." To better understand what others are thinking or proposing, ask targeted questions. Here are some possibilities.

## **Interventions \***

- What is the evidence of the effectiveness of this intervention?
- What is known about the effectiveness for children like my child?
- What is known about the effectiveness in settings like my child's?
- Why is this intervention being recommended? -- the answer should be for your particular child in their particular setting.
- What are the risks? -- the answer should show that risks have been considered and what steps are being taken to minimize the possible risks.
- Do those responsible for implementing this intervention have the necessary training and skills to implement this intervention the way it was designed to be implemented?
- Are resources available to implement this intervention the way it was designed to be implemented?
- How will the effectiveness of this intervention be evaluated? -- the answer should include what will be measured and how often you will be informed of progress.
- What are other options or alternatives?

(For more on interventions see the Matrix Help sheet, *How do I evaluate treatments and interventions?*)

## **Making Progress**

- How is progress being measured?
- How much data was collected to measure progress?
- What can I see that will show me my child's progress?
- What explains this amount of progress?
- Given this progress, how are my child's skills compared to grade level standards?
- How will instruction or the curriculum be changed? -- if more progress is needed.

(For more on making progress see the Matrix Help Sheet, *How do I know if my child is making progress on their IEP?*)

## **Assessment**

- How does this assessment explain the difficulty my child is having with \_\_\_\_?
- What recommendations for instruction result from this assessment? -- if none are included.
- How do these assessment results compare with others from the past?
- Which results show my child's greatest strengths and which the challenges?
- Can you explain how this test measures the skill it was measuring?
- How will this information be used to help teach my child?
- Which results are puzzling to you and why?

(For more on assessment see the Matrix Help Sheet, *My child's special education testing is hard to understand.*)

It is important to ask any questions that come to mind when you are discussing your child's services and instruction. Sometimes professionals need a reminder to explain terms or practices that are familiar to them but not to others.



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\* Courtesy of Dr. Ronnie Detrick of the Wing Institute

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