

Communication to parents ABCDE model

Learning objectives

- To remember that communication to parents is the most important component of IDDEA approach
- Learn good communication skills in a structured & easy to remember steps
- To learn effective prerequisites for communication
- To use skills appropriate to parental understanding.
- To understand parental reactions to difficult situations and help their coping

Factors helping successful communication

- How is it conveyed ?
- Adequate history from parents?
- Adequate time given ?
- Answered questions from parents ?
- Explained diagnosis matching to parental understanding
- Schedule follow up evaluation
- BPNA recommends communication to be considered as a medical intervention

Prerequisites for effective communication

- Attentive & empathetic listening- greeting skills
- Respect for parental concerns & narration- make eye contact, appreciate correct information like remembering wt of the child
- Observe who is the main story teller and the reaction of the other partner but talk to both parents
- Be confident- use demographic identity to your advantage

Face to face communication & effective coping-
listeners use more brain tissue than counsellors



COMMUNICATION-ABCDE MODEL

- ▶ **A**dvance preparation-know all case details prior to the session
- ▶ **B**uild a therapeutic environment/relationship-ambience, privacy
- ▶ **C**ommunicate well- language, clarity of thought
- ▶ **D**eal with patient and family reactions-know the stages-Shock, Denial, Anger, Chronic grief, Acceptance or Rejection. Parents may be in different phase
- ▶ **E**ncourage and validate emotions- deal with a mother who breaks down empathetically

Advance preparation

- HAVE A COMPLETE AXIAL DIAGNOSIS
- Complete investigation
- Have a calm ambience
- Know the psychosocial history of parents
- Talk first only to parents and then grand parents
- Non-categorical listening and information giving

Build a therapeutic environment/relationship

- Call both the parents on a day you have time. Ask them to come back if necessary.
- Know all the facts of the case.
- Give sufficient time, use friendly gestures.
- Have some relevant posters in your clinic or draw diagrams. Trust the parents' intelligence, build rapport.
- Use a friendly tone and not an impersonal professional tone

Communicate well-Use a language parents understand and not the professional jargon we are used to. Listen well empathetically. Parent meetings may help.



Avoid one up man ship and use a common language- Look well informed but not exhibit all that you know. Make them meet other parents with similar challenges

Deal with patient and family reactions

DEbrief

• Parental Reactions

- Shock
- Denial
- Grief
- Guilt
- Anger
- Confusion

Both parents need not be in the same phase-reaction Phases keep coming back in times of transition or some barrier. Consider parents as partners- Debrief after a session

Rejection or acceptance

Encourage and validate emotions

- Acceptance of a child's difference is a time taking process and depends on family types- Give them time. Early intervention teams and self help groups can help



Summary

- Communication needs pre requisites
- Listening is a more active brain work than counselling
- Use simple language as per parents ability
- Good communication helps coping & effective action
- Follow ABCDE model
- Be sensitive to parental reactions
- Debrief and plan action