Available at http://gozips.uakron.edu/~ke3/ACE.pdf and http://www.chp.cmich.edu/cdo/faculty/susan-naeve-velguth.htm

A. C. E.

Audiologic Counseling Evaluation

Informing Parents of Their Child's Hearing Impairment

By Kris English, Ph.D. and Susan Naeve-Velguth, Ph.D.

Student _____ Evaluator _____ Date _____

Instructions: Circle a number to evaluate each counseling skill on a 1 – 5 scale (1 = Not at All; 5 = Definitely or Always).

A. Getting started. This section looks at how the audiologist prepared for the parental consultation. The environment should allow private and comfortable communication, and the audiologist should indicate that a transition in the appointment was taking place.

1. Did the audiologist arrange the environment well? 1 2 3 4 5

The audiologist may have:
- selected a room with a closed door and comfortable lighting
- ensured that the desk was not in between him/her and parents
- arranged to have tissues within reach
- ensured that files, paperwork were put aside but easily accessible
- placed the chairs at an angle to allow for eye contact
- ensured wastebasket, other items were out of the way
- taken measures to prevent interruptions
- Other:

2. Did the audiologist make parents feel comfortable? 1 2 3 4 5

The audiologist may have:
- walked with the parents to the counseling room
- asked parents if they would prefer their child and/or other children to play in another room (attended by office staff).
- offered the parents comfortable seating
- offered to provide parents with toys for children
- Other:

3. Did the audiologist clearly indicate the purpose of this next period of the appointment? 1 2 3 4 5

The audiologist may have:
- stated the purpose of the next period of the appt (e.g., "Now we can go over the results and talk about what they mean.")
- Other:

Score for "Getting Started" _____ / 15 possible

B. Breaking the News. This section focuses on the audiologist's ability to impart diagnostic information to parents with sensitivity and compassion. This can be done by using lay terminology, attending to parental reactions, responding only to the questions posed, and resisting tendencies to "fill up the talk time" with professional monologue.

4. Did the audiologist begin with a "warm-up" type of comment, such as "I know you've been anxious about the results of all those tests" or "I have some difficult news to share with you now." 1 2 3 4 5

The audiologist might have:
- made eye contact first before speaking
- attended to facial expressions and body language
- Other
- spoken more slowly or more softly.
- added, "I'm sorry"

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Rating Scale: 1 = Not at All; 5 = Definitely or Always

5. Did the audiologist describe the test results briefly and simply? 1 2 3 4 5

The audiologist might have:
- used lay terminology. Examples: _____
- avoided creating doubts about the results
- reported the information in one or two sentences
- avoided minimizing the results
- Other:

6. Did the audiologist wait for the parents' response after giving the news? 1 2 3 4 5

The audiologist might have:
- refrained from talking further
- looked down to give the parents time to respond
- refrained from manipulating files, paperwork
- attended to parents' facial expressions, body language
- Other:

Score for "Breaking the News" _____ / 15 possible

C. Assessing Parents' Understanding of/Reaction to the Situation. This section focuses on the audiologist's ability to gauge parents' perceptions and reactions. The amount of information given will depend on what parents already know. The amount of information understood will depend on the language used by the audiologist, as well as actively checking for understanding. In addition, the audiologist will respond to cues suggesting emotional reactions to the information given.

7. Did the audiologist acknowledge emotional reactions to the diagnosis? 1 2 3 4 5

The audiologist might have:
- acknowledged verbal reactions
- acknowledged the fact that getting difficult news can result in no immediate reaction (shock)
- acknowledged nonverbal reactions.
- checked that he/she clearly understood what parent was saying
- indicated that when the news "sinks in," the audiologist will always be available to talk more with the parents
- Other:

8. Did the audiologist allow the parents to decide the detail and language used? 1 2 3 4 5

The audiologist might have:
- provided appropriate information when it was asked for
- responded to the parents' cues, or asked if parents wanted more detail, before becoming more specific.
- checked that s/he clearly understood what parents were saying
- checked that parents were satisfied with their own understanding of terms used.
- Other:

9. Did the audiologist allow the parents to set the pace for the consultation? 1 2 3 4 5

The audiologist might have:
- given information at a rate which gave parents time to think/ respond.
- checked that parents had understood what had been said before giving more information.
- refrained from providing more information than was sought by parents
- Other:

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10. Did the audiologist give information tailored to the parents' expressed concerns? 1 2 3 4 5

The audiologist might have:
- admitted to uncertainty or lack of knowledge when necessary
- provided materials (written and otherwise) at parents' request
- Other:
- answered the parents' questions.
- summarized points for the parents

Total Score for "Assessing Parents' Understanding of/Reaction to the Situation" _____/20 possible

D. Eliciting Concerns. This section focuses on the audiologist's ability to gain a clear idea of how parents perceive the implications of this information, and the concerns it might generate.

11. Did the audiologist specifically invite questions? 1 2 3 4 5

12. Did the audiologist respond to both the content and the underlying emotional aspects of each expressed parental concern? 1 2 3 4 5

The audiologist might have:
- acknowledged the parents' feelings and worries.
- asked questions about these issues
- Other:
- allowed the parents to discuss these issues.
- checked that s/he clearly understood what parent said

Total Score for "Eliciting Concerns" _____/10 possible

E. Giving a Time Frame for Action. This section looks at the audiologist's ability to describe upcoming events. The audiologist will want to convey the need for action while respecting the parents' need to regain control of their family lives.

13. Did the audiologist describe the steps that the family will need to take in the near future (scheduling follow-up appointments, using amplification, choosing communications modes)? 1 2 3 4 5

The audiologist might have:
- been more specific about scheduling a follow-up appointment
- checked to ensure the parents perceived the need for timeliness
- Other:
- been more specific about the purpose of follow-up appointment

14. Did the audiologist provide management choices for the parents? 1 2 3 4 5

The audiologist might have:
- asked if the parents would like to bring support (grandparents, etc.) to upcoming appointments.
- Other:
- asked if the parent would prefer to start remediation procedures immediately (e.g., make ear mold impressions now or wait for the next appointment)

Total Score for "Giving a Time Frame for Action" _____/10 possible

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Rating Scale: 1 = Not at All; 5 = Definitely or Always

F. Suggesting Specific Actions While Waiting for the Follow-up Appointment. Parents have reported that the time between the diagnostic consultation and follow-up appointments can add to their stress when they have nothing to do but wait. This section evaluates the audiologist's ability to provide concrete suggestions about activities parents can do between appointments, if they are so inclined.

15. Did the audiologist suggest a set of activities to consider between appointments? 1 2 3 4 5

The audiologist might have:
- suggested parents keep a log of their child's responses to sounds, describing the sounds and the child's responses
- provided introductory written/video material about hearing loss
– Other:
- provided a sample log for parental use
- asked if parents would like to contact veteran parents
- asked if parents would prefer to have veteran parents initiate contact

16. Did the audiologist provide "first reminders" about attending to all aspects of the child's development, not just the hearing loss? 1 2 3 4 5

The audiologist might have:
- encouraged parents to continue communicating to child
- provided written material about general child development
- encouraged parents about sustaining bonding process
- Other:

Total Score for "While Waiting for Follow-Up Appointment" _____/10 possible

G. General Considerations. This section considers the consultation as a whole.

17. Did the audiologist appear supportive during the consultation? 1 2 3 4 5

The audiologist might have:
- showed warmth
- conveyed a sense of commitment to the parent and family
- conveyed a sense of hope
- Other:
- conveyed empathy
- conveyed personal strength that the parents could depend on

18. Did the audiologist use appropriate body language during the consultation? 1 2 3 4 5

The audiologist might have:
- maintained an appropriate level of eye contact
- showed a competent and caring professional manner.
- Other:
- looked interested and alert to the parents' needs.
- used body language to express undivided attention

19. Did the audiologist convey compassion during the consultation? 1 2 3 4 5

The audiologist might have:
- discussed painful topics with sensitivity
- avoided non sequitur
- Other:
- showed flexibility and sensitivity to parents' needs
- avoided giving false reassurance

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Rating Scale: 1 = Not at All; 5 = Definitely or Always

20. Did the audiologist tailor the pace of the consultation to suit the parent? 1 2 3 4 5

The audiologist might have:
- let the parents speak without interrupting
- used pauses to give parents time to think, respond
- Other:
- responded to parents' cues
- checked that the parents were finished with a topic before moving on another one

21. Did the audiologist effectively manage the time available? 1 2 3 4 5

The audiologist might have:
- sensitively made the parents aware of how much time was available for discussion
- mentioned the commitment to further meetings with the parents
- brought the consultation to an end on a supportive note
- provided a business card with a phone number and encouragement to call when questions arise
- indicated s/he would call in the near future, at the parents' convenience
- Other:

Total Score for "General Considerations" _____/25possible

Overall comments and suggestions:

Reference:

English, K., Naeve-Velguth, S., Rall, E., Uyehara-Isono, J., & Pittman, A. (2007). Development of an instrument to evaluate audiologic counseling skills. *Journal of the American Academy of Audiology, 18*(8), 675-687.

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