



CALIFORNIA AREA INDIAN HEALTH SERVICE
Project ECHO®

Supporting Children & Families in the IEP Process

Kate Turek, MFT, MS, BA
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Child & Mental Health ECHO for Native Youth
2023 Series



Kate Turek (MFT, MS, BA)

Gabrieleño Tongva , Barbareño/Ventureño Chumash,
Native Hawaiian

Kate is the Education & Career Counselor for Southern California American Indian Resources Center (SCAIR Inc.). She works with students from seven counties throughout California. She has a Bachelor's and Master's Degree from Arizona State University in education and leadership with a minor in psychology. She received her Master's in Marriage and Family Therapy from Touro University, New York. She has professional experience ranging from higher education to local school districts and offices of education as an instructor and curriculum builder for special education, gifted learners, and Title Six- Indian Education programming. Kate grew up in southern California, where she now resides with her husband and eight-year-old son. She has personal knowledge working with children on the spectrum, due to her son's diagnosis. Kate struggled throughout her academic career due to being diagnosed with ADHD and math dyslexia. She hopes by helping parents to advocate for themselves, their children will have a better educational experience than she had.



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Learning Objectives

At the end of this presentation, participants will be able to:

- Construct a more mindful power dynamic in an IEP, implementing equitable language.
- Produce a safe space for families to share insights, ideas, and their own personal lived experiences.
- Prioritize a strength-based approach to communication with families.
- Understand the cultural perspective of families with students who have an IEP



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Equitable Language in an IEP Meeting

Present level of educational performance

Academic performance

Karen is a kind, helpful third grader who is always willing to work hard, even on tasks that are difficult for her. She has a strong love of learning and will seek out books relevant to her interests of the outdoors and animals. She is also quite articulate in classroom discussion.

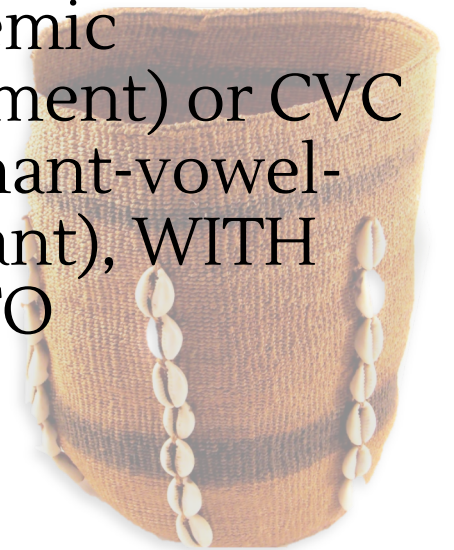
POSITIVE

However, while Karen is presently meeting grade-level expectations in math, she continues to show significant difficulty in the area of reading fluency and comprehension compared to her classroom peers. Karen is able to decode single letters, vowel combinations, and digraphs (like "ch" or "sh") in short, consonant-vowel-consonant (CVC) words, where she is 80% accurate, on average. She has difficulty applying these skills when reading multi-syllable words, where she is 35% accurate, on average, or when reading words in actual passages of text. Recent measures show that Karen is able to read third-grade passages at a rate of 40 words per minute, with 85% accuracy and less than 65% text comprehension.

STATISTICS, DIFFICULTIES

Students in third grade are expected to read 100-140 words per minute, and answer comprehension questions with 90-100% accuracy. Karen is able to read late first-grade passages at 90 words per minute, with 95% accuracy, and comprehension at 90% accuracy on average. This is Karen's independent reading level. Karen's reading difficulties affect her participation in the general education curriculum by making it impossible for her to read grade-level text independently and learn grade-level content effectively.

- When speaking with families be mindful of the acronyms, word usage, and terms associated with their child.
- Ex. PLP (Present level of academic achievement) or CVC (Consonant-vowel-consonant), WITH versus TO



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Creating a Safe Space for Family Contributions, Insights & Ideas

- Validate a parent by opening up communication. Asking for ideas and insights that only family members can contribute.
- Incorporate intergenerational family members into an IEP through open communication and the use of surveys.



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Strength-Based Approach to Communication with Families

- In the PLP section of an IEP, we want to present the child's achievements, skills, and emotional integrity with respect to culture and community.
- How a child adds value to their family, school, classroom, friend-circle, and feels valued.
- The student is NOT the problem. See the student as a member of the community, not separate.



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Traditional Community in an Institutionalized World

- Historical cultural trauma impacts even today
 - Deep roots of distrust due to the negative effects of boarding schools.
 - We as people do not exist outside of assumptions and stereotypes.
 - Spiritual Ceremonies that take children out of school.
(Medicine wheel-mental, physical, emotional & spiritual Balance)
 - Home: Multigenerational



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How does a family already feel?

- Overwhelmed
- Exhausted
- Bad parents
- Anxious
- Stressed
- Confused
- Different



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References

Educational statistics: *US DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION (2019, December 31). *NATIONAL CENTER FOR EDUCATION STATISTICS*.
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Resources

- [Rainbow Connection Family Resource and Empowerment Center](#)
- [Intervention Central](#)
- [Autism National Committee: How Safe is the School House?](#)
- [PBIS: Extending Schoolwide Systems to Support Extracurricular Activities](#)
- [The Family Hope Center](#)
- [Parent to Parent USA](#)



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