

Module: **Family-Centered Practices
for Infants and Toddlers With Visual Impairments**

Session 1: Building Reliable Alliances

Study Questions and Answers for Recommended Reading C: Dote-Kwan, Chen, & Hughes

Dote-Kwan, J., Chen, D., & Hughes, M. (2001). A national survey of service providers who work with young children with visual impairments. *Journal of Visual Impairment & Blindness*, 95(6), 325-337.

1. Surveys revealed that TVIs rated “establishing positive caregiver-child relationships to facilitate development and supporting the family’s concerns, priorities, resources” as being important, but that they were not actually doing this in their professional roles. Provide a rationale describing why this might be true.

Age of teachers surveyed: When they were in school, their teacher preparation programs may not have emphasized family-centered practices. Although respondents may rate these competencies as being important, they may not be aware of how to facilitate family-centered practices.

2. Describe why respondents might have rated the role of service coordination as being least important of the 12 competencies.

This may be true due to the fact that the majority of the teachers surveyed were trained prior to PL 99-457 (1986). Prior to that time, collaboration and service coordination were not mandated. IDEA (1997) Part C requires service coordination.

3. Based upon the results of this research, describe possible training needs for professionals serving infants and preschoolers within the field of visual impairment.
 - **Service providers need to develop competencies to work with families whose cultures and languages are different from their own.**
 - **Service providers need to increase knowledge and develop skills related to working with young children with visual impairments and their families.**
 - **Service providers need to develop specific skills for participating in service delivery teams.**
 - **To meet the legal mandate of IDEA (1997), Part C, EI professionals should be prepared to serve as effective service coordinators.**
4. Survey results indicated that a total of 1,396 infants, toddlers, and preschoolers with visual impairments were receiving early intervention services. Of this total, only 396 had teachers of students with visual impairments (TVIs). Describe why this might be true.
 - **National shortage of teachers of students with visual impairments**

- **Basic special education and early childhood development expertise is sometimes viewed as more important than specialized knowledge of visual impairments, especially with young children who have multiple disabilities (Pogrund, 2002)**
- **Caseload size of TVIs too large to accommodate all families and children (Pogrund, 2002)**