

The SCERTS™ Model

*A Comprehensive
Educational Approach
for Children with
Autism Spectrum Disorders*



Volume II Program Planning & Intervention

by

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Table 3.3. Summary of goals, desired outcomes, and related objectives of emotional support to families in the SCERTS Model

Goal 1: To enhance family members' abilities to cope with the stresses and challenges of raising a child with ASD

Desired outcome: Family members will develop specific coping abilities to manage the inevitable stresses that will be experienced directly due to or as a secondary effect of the child's having ASD.

Specific objectives

- a. Professionals will help family members identify and articulate the major sources of stress related to having a child with ASD.
- b. Professionals will support families in developing coping strategies specific to the major sources of stress that are identified.

Goal 2: To help family members understand and gain access to the range of formal and informal emotional supports that may be available

Desired outcome: Family members will gain access to formal and informal supports that best match the emotional needs of family members at specific points in time.

Specific objectives

- a. Professionals will help family members identify or develop the supports that could be helpful in addressing the emotional needs of the family.
- b. Professionals will help family members use such supports in a manner that best addresses family members' priorities.

Goal 3: To support parents' efforts to deal successfully with professionals, as well as with educational and health care systems

Desired outcome: Parents will develop specific strategies to foster positive parent–professionals relationships and will deal with emotional challenges that may be due to difficult interactions or relationships with professionals or due to difficulties in dealing with educational and health care systems.

Specific objectives

- a. Professionals will identify desirable characteristics of parent–professional relationships and collaboration and the means to develop and maintain such relationships.
- b. Professionals will support parents in addressing difficult relationships.
- c. Professionals will support parents in coping with stresses that arise in dealing with educational and health care systems.

Goal 4: To help family members to identify their own priorities and develop appropriate expectations and realistic, achievable goals for their child's development and family life

Desired outcome: Family members will be clear about the most important issues they wish to address for their child and family, develop realistic goals and expectations for their child, and will create a balance in family life consistent with their lifestyle and values.

Specific objectives

- a. Professionals will engage in dialogues with parents to identify the most crucial issues for the child and family.
- b. Professionals will collaborate with parents to develop realistic short-term goals and expectations for the child.
- c. Professionals will provide opportunities to discuss and problem-solve the challenges of bringing a balance to family life by identifying ways to support the marital relationship and to support siblings and other family members (grandparents and other relatives).

Goal 5: To help parents support siblings with information about ASD when the siblings have questions or when they experience difficulties associated with having a brother or sister with ASD and to help siblings discuss their feelings about having a brother or sister with ASD

Desired outcome: Siblings will be able to acquire the information they need to have a better understanding of issues they encounter related to having a brother or sister with ASD and will be able to cope with difficulties they may experience by discussing their feelings.

Specific objectives

- a. Parents will create an atmosphere of open communication so that siblings feel comfortable in raising questions about their brother or sister or about ASD.
- b. Parents will be able to respond to siblings' questions about ASD in a manner that is appropriate to the siblings' level of understanding.
- c. Parents and professionals will provide opportunities for siblings to openly share their feelings.

Goal 6: To help siblings develop coping strategies for situations that may be stressful

Desired outcome: Siblings will be able to develop and use a variety of coping strategies related to having a brother or sister with ASD

Specific objectives

- a. Parents and/or professionals will provide opportunities to a brother or sister to practice explaining their brothers or sister's disability to others.
 - b. Parents and/or professionals will provide opportunities to discuss other ways to cope in stressful situations specific to the situations encountered by siblings.
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