**Establishing Effective Partnerships in Early Childhood Systems of Care with Families and Across Agencies**

**The Devereux Early Childhood Assessment (DECA) Program**
- Based on resilience theory, the DECA program is a mental health promotion, primary prevention, and early intervention system.
- Fosters partnerships between parents, teachers, and, when necessary, mental health professionals.
- Evidence-based.
- Enhances, not replaces, other curricula.

**The Devereux Early Childhood Assessment (DECA)**
- Core of the DECA program.
- Nationally normed (US), standardized measure of within-child protective factors in children ages 2-5.
- **Assesses** three protective factors:
  - Initiative
  - Self-Control
  - Attachment
- **Screens** for behavioral concerns.

**DECA Scales Structure**

**The Devereux Early Childhood Assessment (DECA) cont.**
- Meets professional standards for assessments.
- Brief – 37 items, 5-8 minutes to complete.
- English and Spanish.
- Computerized administration and scoring available.
- Assessment results lead directly to classroom and home strategies to promote resilience.
Promoting Partnerships with Families

- Both parents and teachers complete the DECA
  - On individual child profile, parents come first
- Rater comparison provides a statistically sound, easy technique to achieve a better understanding of the child's behavior across environments and with different adults
- Based on the standard error of the difference
- Can compare each scale as well as the total

Rater Comparison Discussion Guide

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Parent Rating</th>
<th>Concern</th>
<th>No Concern</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Concern</td>
<td>How can we work together to help the child?</td>
<td>Let me tell you how we work with the child at school.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No Concern</td>
<td>Tell me about what works at home.</td>
<td>Great – how can we continue to support the child?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

DECA & Parent-Professional Collaboration Summary

- Strength-based approach is a better basis for collaboration than deficit approaches
- DECA provides a sound, easy to use technique to compare the parent and teachers perceptions.
- Comparisons can be made at the individual scale level
- Tools are designed to reinforce the primacy of the parent.
- Most importantly, results support collaborative planning to support the child.