

Collaboration Checklist

A Reflective Instrument for Interprofessional Collaboration
in Early Intervention and Special Education.

Ramona Thümmler, Sabine Jurgan,
Ulrike Bockmaier & Nikola Determann

October 2025

Prof. Dr. Ramona Thümmler

<https://orcid.org/0000-0001-7794-7030>

TU Dortmund University &
Humboldt-University Berlin

Published under licence [CC-BY-SA 4.0](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/4.0/)



Abstract

The Collaboration Checklist is a tool designed to facilitate the preparation for and reflection on interprofessional cooperation within the field of early intervention in special education. Grounded in current research on cooperation and collaboration, it aims to support professionals in self-reflection and clarifying their professional identity.

As collaboration across professional boundaries is often characterized by unclear responsibilities, differing system logics and the inherent complexity of individual cases, the checklist explicitly addresses these challenges.

The first part focuses on the individual professional profile. It encourages reflection on the professional, organisational and personal aspects of practice, and prompts professionals to outline their existing networks and pinpoint areas for development.

The second part focuses on the case process itself and distinguishes three phases: initial, ongoing, and post-case reflection. It also addresses how conflicts within the collaboration can be managed constructively and outlines concrete courses of action.

Thus, the checklist serves two main purposes: first, to help professionals define their role and determine their contribution to the case; and second, to highlight factors that support a successful case process. The checklist is based on a professional attitude in line with the ICF and places the perspectives and needs of the family and the child at the center.

Keywords

Collaboration, Professionalization, Early Intervention, Self-Reflexion, Multiprofessional Collaboration, Interprofessional Collaboration

Citation

Thümmler, R., Jurgan, S., Bockmaier, U., Determann, N. (2025). *Collaboration Checklist. A reflective Instrument for Interprofessional Collaboration in Early Intervention and Special Education. Version 1.0.* <http://doi.org/10.17877/DE290R-25833>

Collaboration Checklist

A Reflective Instrument for Interprofessional Collaboration in Early Intervention and Special Education.

Part I: Aspects regarding my own professionalism in the context of network collaboration

Ramona Thümmler, Sabine Jurgan, Ulrike Bockmaier & Nikola Determann

2025

<p>Personal Profile</p>	<p>Professional</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Which topics am I familiar with? ▪ Which topics should I seek professional support for? ▪ Which topics would I like to pursue further training in? <p>Organizational</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Which communication channels do I primarily use? ▪ How can others get in touch with me? How do I communicate this? ▪ What resources does my institution provide for collaboration (time, billing, logistics)? <p>Personal</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Which aspects are important to me in collaboration? ▪ Where are my professional boundaries?
<p>Network</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Who works in my network? ▪ How can I get in touch with the network partners? ▪ How can I maintain and develop my network? ▪ Regarding which topics should I expand my network? ▪ How can I achieve that?

Collaboration Checklist

A Reflective Instrument for Interprofessional Collaboration in Early Intervention and Special Education.

Part II: Questions relating to how a case is processed in relation to networks.

Ramona Thümmler, Sabine Jurgan, Ulrike Bockmaier & Nikola Determann

2025

Structures that exist independently of the individual case are available whenever required.

<p>Initial Phase / At the Beginning of the Case</p>	<p>Focus Team & Network</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Who is involved and who is responsible for what? ▪ Who takes on which assignment and the associated tasks? ▪ Which alignments need to be made? ▪ How and where do I plan for exchange? ▪ Is this known to all participants? ▪ Who assumes case management? ▪ Have the necessary authorizations for the release of confidential information been obtained? <p>Focus Goals</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Which goals are being pursued? ▪ Are there any shared goals? / Are the goals common goals? ▪ Is the child's participation well considered? <p>Focus Family</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Am I sufficiently aware of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - parents' expectations? - the parents' hopes and fears? - the parents' needs to be able to cooperate? ▪ „Who is already working with you on this problem?“ <p>Create a free and equal situation. It's difficult for parents to inform you frankly if they fear to be blamed for „doctor-hopping “</p>
---	---

<p>During the Case</p>	<p>Focus: Shaping Collaboration & Networking</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Who moderates the exchange? ▪ Questions of responsibility: ▪ What does the child need? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - What does the family need? - How can this need be met? - Who can provide this? - What support does the institution need to facilitate participation?? ▪ Do the parents or the child need an 'advocate'? ▪ Is there a conflict? If yes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Can the different perspectives coexist for now? - Can we find and define common ground within the network? - Is another authority needed for clarification? <p>Focus Case Progression</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Which person or institution is best suited to take the next meaningful step with the child or family? ▪ How can this assistance be provided? ▪ Who in my professional network could offer this? ▪ How do feedback processes function during referrals? ▪ Are the parents aware of the further procedure, including communication? ▪ Does the course of action make sense from the parents'/child's perspective? ▪ Do they know all participants and their roles? ▪ Am I willing to tolerate ambiguity? ▪ What points remain unresolved at the moment? ▪ Who will take responsibility for further collaboration?
<p>After Case Closure / Final Phase</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ How satisfied am I with the course of the case? ▪ How satisfied are the parents/the child with the course? ▪ How well did we achieve the goals? ▪ Which coordination efforts went well? Why? ▪ Where did we encounter difficulties? ▪ Which person do I contact to prepare for possible future cases? ▪ Which changes might be useful in future cases?