



# **Families, Professionals, and Exceptionality: Collaborating for Empowerment (4th Edition)**

*By Ann Turnbull, H. Rutherford Turnbull*

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This book is for courses that prepare special and general educators and related service providers to form successful partnerships with families of children with disabilities. Written by the best-known authors in the field of family and professional collaboration, this practical text instructs teachers and families how to empower, collaborate, and advocate for children with special needs. It retains the features of the third edition—the family systems perspectives, an emphasis on empowerment through parent/family and professional collaboration, and a multicultural approach. The authors have created a framework that transforms the complex theory of empowerment and implements techniques into an approach that is easy to understand and to apply.

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## **Editorial Review**

### From the Inside Flap

#### Preface

Welcome to *Families, Professionals, and Exceptionality: Collaborating for Empowerment*. This, our fourth edition, retains the features of the third—the family systems perspective, an emphasis on empowerment through parent/family and professional collaboration, and a multicultural approach.

In addition, this edition highlights ten of the same families who appeared in the third edition: the Smith family (chapter 1), the Cooper family (chapter 3), the Rocco family (chapter 4), the Cofresi family (chapter 5), the Benito family (chapter 6), the Battles family (chapter 7), the Baccus-Luker family (chapter 8), the Manos family (chapter 9), the Hoyt family (chapter 14), and the Roach family (chapter 15).

This edition, however, adds five new families: the Wade family (chapter 2), the Markey family (chapter 10), the Lee family (chapter 11), the Motley family (chapter 12), and the Gonzalez family (chapter 13). **Text Organization**

This text is organized into three parts. Part 1, "Understanding Empowerment," describes the concept of empowerment historically and currently. Part 2, "Understanding Families," describes families as interactive systems, enabling you to understand them from a systems perspective. Part 3, "Collaborating for Empowerment," explains how you can empower families, professionals, and yourself by using seven opportunities for partnerships and by committing to eight obligations to develop reliable alliances. We not only present the theory of empowerment, but we also suggest techniques for advancing empowerment through collaboration. And we synthesize the literature on empowerment, relying on the concepts and research dates reported in several disciplines. Through our synthesis, we create a framework that transforms this complex theory and implements techniques into an approach that is easy to understand and apply.

Throughout the text we emphasize mutual empowerment, believing that whatever empowers one person should and can empower another. As one person in a collaborative partnership becomes more empowered, so will all of them. Empowerment, after all, is a value that families, professionals, and you as an individual can pursue and obtain through collective action. **Text Features**

We bring together theory, research, and the best practices related to family-professional partnership from both general and special education. The effort to merge these two bodies of knowledge is, we believe, a "first." With this merger comes the opportunity for families of all students to participate in tomorrow's schools in a more empowered and effective way.

In each chapter, we feature "family voices," portraying a family in the opening and closing vignette and relying on the family's experience and voice throughout the chapter. The vignette and the "My Voice" feature are not ornamental. Rather, they are instrumental, linking the concepts and content of the chapter to real families, real professionals, and real schools. Through these voices, you will acquire a richer, real-life understanding of the family systems approach.

These families and professionals speak with many dialects and accents; represent a broad spectrum of American life; and show how people of every economic and social stratum, of every color, race, and ethnic origin, in every part of this country empower themselves, their family members, and their colleagues in

schools and communities. To repeat: Empowerment is for everyone, and these voices show exactly how everyone can become more empowered through collaboration.

The chapters are strong theoretically and empirically in terms of their research base. Just as important (because we want this book to make a difference for you and others, personally and professionally), each chapter is highly applied, setting out techniques for you and others to use in collaborating for empowerment. The "Together We Can" and "Tips" features exemplify the applied nature of each chapter. Acknowledgments

We have been privileged to have an "empowerment team" to assist us in preparing and writing this book. Lois Weldon has been our mainstay in the production phase, preparing draft after draft after draft and never once failing to produce work of the highest quality and with the maximum "smile factor." We could not do our work without her. Two new colleagues have helped us in other production aspects: Mary Woodward and Anette Lundsgaarde have been liaison to the families we feature in the vignettes. Anette was particularly helpful early on but, because she was so important in other aspects of work at the Beach Center on Families Disability, she was obligated not to complete that which she had begun. Mary has applied her sharp editorial eyes to our work, assuring that it represents the families fairly and that it is clear and engaging in its presentation. She also has pursued, Sherlock Holmes-like, all of our permissions and references, a task for which only the most assiduous person is qualified. Both have been upbeat when other mortals might have been downcast because of the tedious nature of some of our work. Erin Jones has assisted with the arduous and painstaking task of making certain that our scholarship is fully and accurately referenced—a task she completed with good cheer and reliability.

Of course, this book builds on the previous edition, to which Opal Folks, Ben Furnish, and Richard Viloria, all from the Beach Center, made important contributions.

And, talking about contributions, let us acknowledge the willingness—indeed, the eagerness—of the families whom we feature in the vignettes to be part of our team. Each of them is, indeed, a "professor"—a person who professes a certain perspective or base of knowledge. They profess—they teach—that families are indispensable partners with professionals in providing a free, appropriate, and inclusive education to their children who have disabilities. They not only profess that message, but they also live it. And they do so in trying circumstances but with optimism, determination, and faith. They help us realize, once again, how very blessed we are to have them as friends and colleagues; how much we learn from their experiences; how much we value them and their contributions to "the cause" (the parent/family-professional partnership cause); and how fortunate we are to be, like them, parents of a person with a disability—J.T. (Jay Turnbull), who has so enriched and transformed our lives.

It is fashionable nowadays to be "post-modern"—by which is meant that the "voices" of "ordinary people" are "validated." That sometimes amuses us, for we were, we believe, "post-modern" before the term entered the common language. We say that because in 1978 we co-edited a book, *Parents Speak Out*, that contained the life stories of professionals who were also parents of children with disabilities. That book provided a forum for those "voices," and in this book, we simply carry forward the commitment we have had for the last 21 years to be a modest vehicle for those voices to be heard nationally. When *Parents Speak Out* was first published, the publisher was you guessed it—the same publisher that is responsible for this book. Our hats are off, then, to Merrill/Prentice-Hall.

Specifically, we thank those at Merrill/Prentice-Hall who have helped so much with this book: Ann Davis, our executive editor; Pat Grogg, liaison between Ann on the one hand and ourselves on the other; and Sheryl Langner, our production editor; and Steve Botts, our artist and illustrator.

Each of them has been an effective collaborator and reliable ally; their respective expertise and

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We would also like to acknowledge the following individuals who reviewed the manuscript and offered suggestions for improvement: Greg Conderman, University of Wisconsin at Eau Claire; Louise Fulton, California State University at San Bernardino; Robert W. Ortiz, California State University at Fullerton; Alec F. Peck, Boston College; and Ellen Williams, Bowling Green State University.

Finally, we are grateful to Amy Gehl at Carlisle Communications, Ltd., for her skillful and patient work in the "go-to-press" stages of this book.

Rud and Ann Turnbull  
Lawrence, Kansas

From the Back Cover

### **Features include:**

- New: broadens the range and severity of disabilities covered; a number of new families are featured, many of whom have children with mild disabilities.
- Advances an "empowerment" model of collaboration.
- Explains the 1997 amendments to IDEA and how to put them into practice.
- Companion Website: [www.prenhall.com/turnbull](http://www.prenhall.com/turnbull)

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