

Family Engagement Resource Guide

Quick Reference

Tips for Engaging Families

1. Focus on families and put them in the forefront of everything you do.
2. Be passionate, enthusiastic and positive about your work.
3. Be a learner. Learn from your experiences and your families.
4. Begin every day prepared. Families deserve your best every day.
5. End every day with reflection. What will you do differently tomorrow?
6. Talk with your supervisor if you have concerns about your work with a family

Family engagement is a collaborative and strengths-based process through which family support professionals and families build positive, goal-oriented relationships.

Three Phases of Building a Helping Relationship

1. Building a Foundation and Developing Trust
2. Deepening the Relationship
3. Maintaining the Relationship and Keeping it Fresh

Engagement Strategies

1. Communication and Listening
2. Sharing Information
3. Engaging the Whole Family
4. Strength-Based Approach
5. Adult Learning Principles

Allow time for REFLECTION to broaden your awareness of how you experience yourself and others.

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Family Engagement Resource Guide

Resources

- Exploring the Family’s Daily Routines – see page 3
- Trust Builders for Growing Partnerships with Families – see page 4
- Sample Reflective Questions to Use with Families – see page 5
- Supporting Family Participation, Family Guided Routines Based Intervention - [English](#)
- Informed Family Decision-Making Practices Checklist, Copyright © 2018, Early Childhood Technical Assistance Center - [English](#)
- Five Strategies for Partnering with Families, Office of Head Start, National Center on Parent, Family and Community Engagement - [English](#)

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Exploring the Family's Daily Routines

- Tell me about a typical day?
- What time do family members wake up?
- What happens after working?
- How do you handle meals and snacks?
- What happens in between meals and snacks?
- Does your child take naps? What time?
- What happens after nap time?
- What are the child's activities? What does the child like to do?
- What time do family members go to bed?
- What happens before bedtime (i.e. bath, reading)?
- How does everyone sleep?
- Where does everyone sleep?
- Do the child's caregivers work outside the home? What is the schedule?
- If the caregiver(s) work, who takes care of the child? Where?
- Are there other children in the home? What are their schedules?

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Trust Builders for Growing Partnerships with Families

- First and foremost, convey the message “I care about you.”
- Show respect for the time, personal space and authority of all family members who may play a role in your partnership.
- Get to know the family by exploring their interests and sharing what you have in common.
- Express empathy regarding the stresses of caring for a newborn (or the discomforts of pregnancy).
- Explain that you are not coming to their home as “an expert” You will be “partners” exploring and learning together.
- Be reliable, dependable and flexible.
- Make special efforts to involve dad, grandparents, and extended family.
- Ask parents what they have already learned about their baby.
- Stay present and listen with empathy when something is shared that is uncomfortable for you. This is an example of self-regulation.
- Pay attention and respond to parents’ cues regarding the timing of your visit and any discomforts they express.

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Sample reflective questions to use with families:

- How do you think that went? Did it go as you expected?
- How did that make you feel when...?
- Why do you think he/she did that?
- What do you think this behavior means?
- What did you do?
- What would you do differently next time?
- What do you think worked best/went well?
- What did you do to help make that change? What part did you play in...?
- How did you know to do that?
- Who else can help you with this?
- How have you handled these situations in the past?
- What would make things better?
- What is the next step?
- What do you think your child is trying to tell you when he/she....?

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