A Menu for Successful Family Engagement-
How Administrators Set the Table

Early Childhood Investigations July 2104
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You are invited to contact me with any questions / concerns / needs... related to building stronger relationships with families in your program!!!!
Co-Author: Menu for Successful Parent and Family Involvement in final stages of refinement for republishing

Parent Involvement Coordinator

Research Project- What strategies are effective in engaging families?

Learning Props CEO- Developing resources to support working with families

Consulting-Coaching-Training- Former Classroom Educator
Webinar Learning Goals: Participants will:

- Become more mindful of the value of engaging families
- Consider how you can intentionally guide your program in reaching stronger engagement levels
- Implement action steps to support parents as partners
Administrators Set the Table for Achieving Effective Engagement

- Acquire knowledge & skills about engagement
- Establish policy and procedure
- Train and coach staff & parents
- Sell the idea of “PARTNERSHIP”
The idea of working with families starts with leadership and spreads through the program.

A sturdy building is built by first establishing a good foundation.
To everything there is an exception!

There are times when the initiative for parent engagement starts from parents or staff...
Moving from Conversation to Action

• Goal # 1  **Become more mindful** of the value of engaging families

Does your program and staff **really** believe that engaging parents is important?
Clarifying Terminology

Involvement vs. Engagement

Family / Parent Framework
Conversations about parent engagement:

Spring 2014
Department of Education
Released New Parent and Community Engagement Framework

Conversations about parent engagement:

HEAD START PARENT, FAMILY, & COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT FRAMEWORK
2011
https://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov
Conversations about parent engagement:

NAEYC (National Association for the Education of the Young Child)
http://www.naeyc.org
The program establishes and maintains collaborative relationships with each child's family to foster children's development in all settings. These relationships are sensitive to family composition, language, and culture.

If you are a member they have wonderful tools to use.
Conversations about parent engagement:

Family Involvement Network of Educators (FINE)
http://www.hfrp.org/family-involvement
Conversations about parent engagement:

2014 NAEYC Institute--Research Poster Session-
21% of displays were about parent engagement

Race to the TOP has mandate Parent/Family outreach

State Learning Standards and Quality Improvement Initiatives in each state address parent engagement- be aware of your states recommendations
PARENT or PARTNER
What is the difference?
PARENT
\PARTNER
PARENT or PARTNER
What is the difference?

You “R”
It is about
“R”elationships
You Do the Math:

• Select a student in your program: How many hours are they in your program each week? _X_

• There are 24 hours a day x 7 days in a week = 168 hours per week

• For calculations purpose assume children sleep 8 hours a day, 7 days a week (56 hours) Subtract that from 168 hours ... that leaves 112 awake hours

• 112 awake hours per week minus hours child is in your program _X_. Who has more impact potential?
What is your program to parent time ratio?

**Preschool**
12 hours a week  
(4 days @ 3 hours)

112
-12 program hours
100 family hours

**Child care**
45 hours a week  
(5 days @ 9 hours)

112
-45 program hours
67 family hours

We must WORK together ...
What is already on your Menu? What would improve it?

Self reflect on:
Strengths of your program:  Areas for growth:
1. 1.
2. 2.
3. 3.
Be Attentive to Your Program

What issues are families facing?

Are there staff assumptions regarding parents?

Are families empowered and honored?

Identify parent/family perception of your “Relationship”.

SEEK PARENT INPUT!
Sharing Information with Families*
Welcoming Families
Involving Parents in the Program
Supporting Home Learning*
Working With the Community
Goal # 2 and 3:

- Consider how you can intentionally guide your program in reaching stronger engagement levels.
- Implement action steps to support parents as partners.
What will you put on your Menu?

1

2

3
Welcoming Families

Provide name tags for events

Establish parent places in your program

Make connections with families meaningful
Prepare Nametags for Visits and Events with Additional Information

Sue Smith
Parent of: Amy Smith

Guest of:
We are honored to have you here!

Grandparent of:
We like to **FISH** together
Provide Parent Places

• Where should guests park?
• Where do personal belongings go?
• Is there a place for visitors to sit?
• Are there *waiting* materials?
• Is there a recommended visit time?
• Might refreshments be available?
• Who will greet & meet guests?
Make connections with families meaningful

Address each family member by name

Intentionally engage them at each encounter

They should leave:

- knowing their child is in good care
- with knowledge about their child’s day
- given an idea to supporting learning

How was XXX’s weekend?

We talked about the color red today—find red things on the way home
Involving Parents in the Program

Events:

Blues Clues
RIF book event

Invite, INVITE, INVITE
Avoid assuming and judging parents
Event Design

Does the event fulfill program goals?
What % are coming to events?
Not everyone will select the same “menu” selections?
After an event record attendance, get feedback, make a summary, continue to promote the message…
Guide staff to effectively use parents/volunteers

Training volunteers
Train staff to effectively use support
Assuring security, confidentiality, reliability

Staff created resource:
Top portion: How can volunteers help in this learning center
Bottom section: Information about how center supports learning
Working With the Community

Be aware of community culture

Reach out to community members and welcome them as guests

Sell your program to families and community members
Sell your program
What is being learned?---Why?

Look at us exploring—
new words: investigate, cooperating

Which balls are spheres?
Which displaces the most water?

Using thinking skills
to solve a problem—
finding the right piece ...
Sharing Information with Families

Reminder what are you adding to your menu?
Communication should be: 2-ways and 3 x 3

Send every message 3 times in 3 different ways

3 x 3
Gather contact information

Name __________________________
Child’s name ____________________
Phone (c) ___________ (w) ___________
Email

Preferred form of contact:
   Phone   Email   In-Person   Text message

Are you able to receive images via your phone plan? Yes    No

Best time of day to reach you: Morning   Afternoon   Evening
Address Language Barriers

Honor families and their language

Provide resources in their language even if not doing direct instruction in their family language

Show respect by learning key phrases

Google Translations
http://translate.google.com

Can You Greet the Whole Wide World? 12 common phrases in 12 different languages

Say Hello!
Ciao Hola Konichiwa Al Salaam A’alaykum Shalom Jambo Bonjour Ni Hao Ni Yo

Can You Say Peace?

FollettEarlyLearning.com phone 888.511.5114-over 80 languages carried
www.learningprops.com
Arabic, Chinese, Spanish
Gathering information

- Use how and what questions?
  How can we help your child?
  What do you like best about …?
  How can we support …?

- Listen between the lines…

- Ask for input… Tell me… What works for your child? How do …?
After an issue has been raised and addressed make note to follow-up.
Richly convey mission / caring statements

Create a mission statement “WE CARE”
Begin statement with action expectation:
Examples:
Committed to excellence for …
Guiding Students to Achieve…Succeed

Confirm all staff deliver caring / mission statements
News Sharing tips... PLUS

Include pictures and graphics (secure photo releases)

$ test

Proof read 3 times by 3 people

Report but also inform...give information about activities to come

Every article must answer who, what, when, where, why, how...

Color catches more attention

Share with predictable frequency
Supporting Home Learning

Take Home Resources
Kits / Lending Library

Make-It Take-It

Show and Tell / Learning Stations
Effect of Asking Parents to Be Engaged in Learning Activities at Home: Will they Become Involved?

Vonda Jump Norman Ph.D.
Utah State University

Bev Schumacher
Learning Props


2009 Research Project

What strategies are effective in engaging families?

- 83 participating families, assigned randomly
- 10 weeks: September-November, 2009
- 8 classrooms (Head Start and Public Pre-K programs) (11 classes)
- Pre/post tests from families and staff
- 93% of families completed project
- 3 Intervention levels
  - Suggestions
  - Suggestions with prompts
  - Shared resources
Pretest findings:

Families reported being involved.

When asked:

“How else would you like to be involved in your child’s education?”

Of those that responded to open ended question – 35% said:

Any way possible/whatever the teacher recommends
1. Ideas recommended to parents - simple suggestions

2. Suggestions with prompts -- low cost/no cost props... give-a-way or make-and-take activities

3. Resources shared with families

Recommendation of the research that all 3 of these practices be engaged in by programs
Opposites / Direction Words

Level 1

In a face-to-face exchange educators were to suggest that the family play a game of hide-and-seek with the parent giving clues for the children to apply directional words. If face-to-face opportunity was not available teacher was asked to make a phone call.

Level 2

Foam shape with directions
Opposites / Direction Words

Level 3
Game Kit
Eng. Or Bilingual
Spanish-English
Learning Props Games

www.learningprops.com
Phone 877-776-7750

11 themed kits
Each has: book, home activity page, dice & movers

Also available:
Bilingual Spanish / English
## Parent Posttest Data

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Level 1</th>
<th>Level 2</th>
<th>Level 3</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>How many total activities did you do with your child? (out of possible 10)</td>
<td>6.44</td>
<td>7.33</td>
<td>8.24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How many people worked with your child on activities?</td>
<td>2.04</td>
<td>1.93</td>
<td>2.56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How long did you spend doing activities? (minutes)</td>
<td>13.94</td>
<td>17.91</td>
<td>22.88</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How many times did you work on the activities?</td>
<td>2.15</td>
<td>2.34</td>
<td>2.72</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Level 1–Suggestions; Level 2 – Suggestions with Prompts; Level 3- Resources
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level 1- Suggestions</th>
<th>Level 2 Suggestion with Prompt</th>
<th>Level 3 Shared Resource</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>8 Activities</strong></td>
<td><strong>9 Activities</strong></td>
<td><strong>All Activities</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>averaged <strong>more</strong></td>
<td>averaged <strong>more</strong></td>
<td>averaged <strong>more</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>than <strong>11 minutes</strong></td>
<td>than <strong>13 minutes</strong></td>
<td>than <strong>18 minutes</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>of engagement time</td>
<td>of engagement time</td>
<td>of engagement time</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Range</strong></td>
<td><strong>Range</strong></td>
<td><strong>Range</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>5.88 - 19.00</strong></td>
<td><strong>8.7 - 24.15</strong></td>
<td><strong>18.42 - 29.58</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Average 13.94</strong></td>
<td><strong>Average 17.91</strong></td>
<td><strong>Average 22.88</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Best
- Body Part activity page / read to me sticker
- Finger play stick puppets
- Color supply bag

### Worst
- Door sign
- Assignments to record activities and return
- No significant low item
Home Activity Page

Read together…

Lean juntos…

Take time to read to your child.

Dedique tiempo para leerle a su niño.

Home Activity Page / Página De Actividad Para La Casa
This is a vocabulary building task.
Esta es una tarea para aumentar el vocabulario.

Talk about the body parts listed below:
Hable acerca de las partes del cuerpo listadas abajo:

- Find the parts on the drawing.
- Busquen las partes en el dibujo.
- Ask your child to find and name their body parts.
- Pida al niño que señale y nombre sus partes del cuerpo.

ankle / el tobillo
arm / el brazo
cheek / la mejilla
chest / el pecho
chin / la barbilla
ear / la oreja
elbow / el codo
eyebrow / la ceja
face / la cara
feet / los pies
fingernail / la uña
fingers / los dedos
de la mano
foot / el pie
toreando / la trena
hair / el cabello, el pelo
hand / la mano
head / la cabeza
heel / el talón

hip / la cadera
knee / la rodilla
leg / la pierna
lips / los labios
mouth / la boca
neck / el cuello
nose / la nariz
palm / la palma
shin / la espinillera
shoulder / el hombro
stomach / el estómago
teeth / los dientes
thigh / el muslo
tooth / el diente
tongue / la lengua
waist / la cintura
wrist / la muñeca

✓ Checking Our Progress / Anotando Nuestro Progreso
Which body parts did your child know?
¿Cuáles partes del cuerpo conocía el niño?

What words need to be learned?
¿Cuáles palabras necesita aprender?

© More Fun Things To Do!
© ¡Más Cosas Divertidas Para Hacer!
Look at books, magazines, or mailed advertisements.
Name the body parts you see.
Miren los libros, revistas, o anuncios recibidos por correo.
Nombren las partes del cuerpo que vean.
On-The-Go

Doing Things with Music

To help your child succeed, you can:
- Encourage your child to make sounds (la-la-la)
- Show your child how to move to the music—car dancing—when you’re stopped at a light!
- Ask Yes/No questions (e.g., Does this song make you feel happy?)

To make it more of a challenge, you can:
- Encourage your child to sing without you
- Let your child use a musical instrument such as a toy drum
- Have your child create dance moves—but stay buckled up!
- Ask open-ended questions (e.g., Why does this music make you feel like dancing?)

Hints

Beginning to Sing Songs

To help your child succeed, you can:
- Play your child’s favorite tape or CD in the car
- Sing his or her favorite song while driving
- Bounce up and down in the car seat!
- Tune the radio to your child’s favorite station

To make it more of a challenge, you can:
- Encourage your child to move to the beat on his or her own while in the car seat
- Encourage your child to make gestures that go with the song all by him or herself
- Have your child sing some of the song’s words aloud (e.g., Wheels on the Bus)
- Have your child say the rhyming words with you

Make Mealtimes Learning Times

Mealtimes are great opportunities for preschoolers to have conversations, use their manners, and even practice math. Here are some ways to keep the fun and learning going at your next family meal.

Set the table. Together you and your child can count the number of forks you need, note where each piece of utensil goes, and point out that there is one place setting for each person. This lets preschoolers practice an important math skill: one-to-one correspondence.

Try new foods. Preschoolers learn to be more independent and open-minded when they choose to try a new food. Vary the foods you serve and introduce new items. Set a good example by trying the food first and describing why you like it. Be patient! It can take up to 12 tries before a child decides she likes a new food.

Talk during the meal. Talking with preschoolers helps them learn new words and understand how to use sentences. They can share their ideas, tell you about the day’s events, and make requests. Encourage listening too, so preschoolers can learn about taking turns and the patterns and rhythms of conversation.

Encourage self-service. Preschoolers are able to use utensils, drink from cups, serve themselves, and more. Help your child grow his independence. He can prepare his own plate and pour a drink from a small pitcher.

A message from your child’s teacher

NAEYC members benefit
Message in a Backpack
http://www.naeyc.org/tyc/backpack
Puppet kit supported with words to finger play
Give-a-way Resource - lunch bag with resources to support color learning

My Color Book
Use this book to learn about colors. Use colors or markers to label things. You can also play with colors or color game. Have fun as you explore color fun.

Made By
## Teacher Posttest Data

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Level 1</th>
<th>Level 2</th>
<th>Level 3</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>How involved were parents <strong>based on scale</strong>: 1-Not at all; 2-Very little; 3-neutral, 4-somewhat; 5-Very interested</td>
<td>3.64</td>
<td>4.38</td>
<td>4.62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How involved were students <strong>same scale as above</strong></td>
<td>3.54</td>
<td>4.45</td>
<td>4.58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Effectiveness of activities in engaging families by level <strong>Teachers gave those they thought effective a +</strong></td>
<td>3.01</td>
<td>5.11</td>
<td>7.03</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Level 1–Suggestions;  Level 2 – Suggestions with Prompts;  Level 3- Resources
Lending Library Can Be Any Size
Log book for parent checkout
Make-It Take-It

Affirms to families that learning activities are possible with what they have

Use materials that are easily available, low cost

Sensory Cup  Puzzle  Egg carton activity

color match-name speller
Show and Tell / Learning Stations

Set up displays  (tell why of the learning)

Have children demonstrate skills being practiced
We pay attention to the things that are measured:

How do you hold your staff accountable?
Can you do comparisons from year to year?
How do you get parent input?
What did you put on your Menu?
The job that is never done...

Constant process:
assessing where we are at, what worked
focusing outreach on those not as connected
training staff and coaching
seeking parent input
Thank you for taking time to reflect on your relationships with families.

Parent or Partner
What is the difference?

YOU “R” it is about “R”elationships
Questions???

Feel free to contact me with questions that do not get answered or those that occur to you as you continue your reflections.