



FAMILY ENGAGEMENT IS EVERYONE'S BUSINESS

North Carolina Community Action Agency Conference

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The information in this presentation does not belong to the presenter. The presenter used information from the a variety of resources including the ECLKC.


FAMILY STRUCTURES ARE DIVERSE

- **Immigrant Family**
- **Adoptive Family**
- **Single-parent Family**
- **Blended Family**
- **Multi-generational Family**
- **Same sex Family**
- **Childless Family**
- **Foster Family**
- **Surrogate Family**
- **Homeless Family**





FAMILY ENGAGEMENT IS...

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



It is a shared responsibility of families and staff at all levels that requires mutual respect for the roles and strengths each has to offer.

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- Family engagement focuses on culturally and linguistically responsive relationship-building with key family members in a child's life.
 - These people include pregnant women and expectant families, mothers, fathers, grandparents, and other adult caregivers.



It requires making a commitment to creating and sustaining an ongoing partnership that supports family well-being.



It also honors and supports the parent-child relationships that are central to a child's healthy development, school readiness, and well-being.

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Designate one person from each table to receive the topic that your table will discuss.
2. Designate someone at your table to record your answers on the large post it paper at your table. As you talk think of WHAT MEDIUM (twitter)? WHO?
3. Designate someone to keep the discussion focused and everyone on task.
4. Designate someone to share your top TWO, AWESOME and FABULOUS answers when we report out. Each table will have 1 minute to share the top TWO answers of their focused discussion. We may not have time to hear everyone's responses but we will try!

INSTRUCTIONS CONTINUED

- Think from your perspective/role and think from the perspective of others too. Example – Teacher's how does a bus driver's interactions with the family affect your job?
 - Example bus drivers and custodians should know what is happening at each site so they can discuss center activities, and encourage families to attend events.
 - Example Father-daughter dance or center cookout
- Everyone at the table has something to contribute

ROLE PLAY

NEGATIVE & STRENGTHS BASED APPROACH

- Someone to be a teacher or a Family or Client Services Worker (encouraging a parent to volunteer/go back to school/take advantage of services offered by the agency)
- Someone to be a parent or client (not sure he or she wants to do what is being asked of him or her)
- Someone to be the cook or another staff person (in the hallway overhearing the conversation)
- Someone to be the administrator (hears the cook or employee talking to the parent & walks the parent to the door)

IDEAS FOR ENGAGING FAMILIES

- Try to engage families using a variety of methods like phone calls, apps, social media, notes, and personal contact. Keep a log of how each family prefers to communicate. Agency's may need to revisit their policies and procedures to adjust to working with 21st Century families.
- Acknowledge that most families are very busy. Keep your meetings and conversations as brief and to the point as possible without compromising the intent of the meeting, which may be establishing a relationship.
- Initiate conversations with families for positive reasons. Make sure each interaction includes some positive news.



IDEAS FOR ENGAGING FAMILIES


- Engage families in creative ways.
- Engage families in culturally relevant activities and remember to sensitive to their rights to self-determination.
- Empower families by giving them the opportunity to organize and lead an event or activity. Someone from the agency would need to provide the agency rules to avoid any issues.



Remember what you say and do is important!

Do not minimize the importance of
YOUR
interactions with the children and families
you serve.

Wherever you go, whatever you do, you
represent your agency.



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