

WHAT I AM LEARNING AS A SOLE
FAMILY SUPPORT IN MY PROGRAM
AND WHAT I WISH I WAS TOLD
FROM THE GET-GO

Javier Ramos, Family Support Specialist





WHO AM I?



- Worked in the medical field for 10 years right after High School

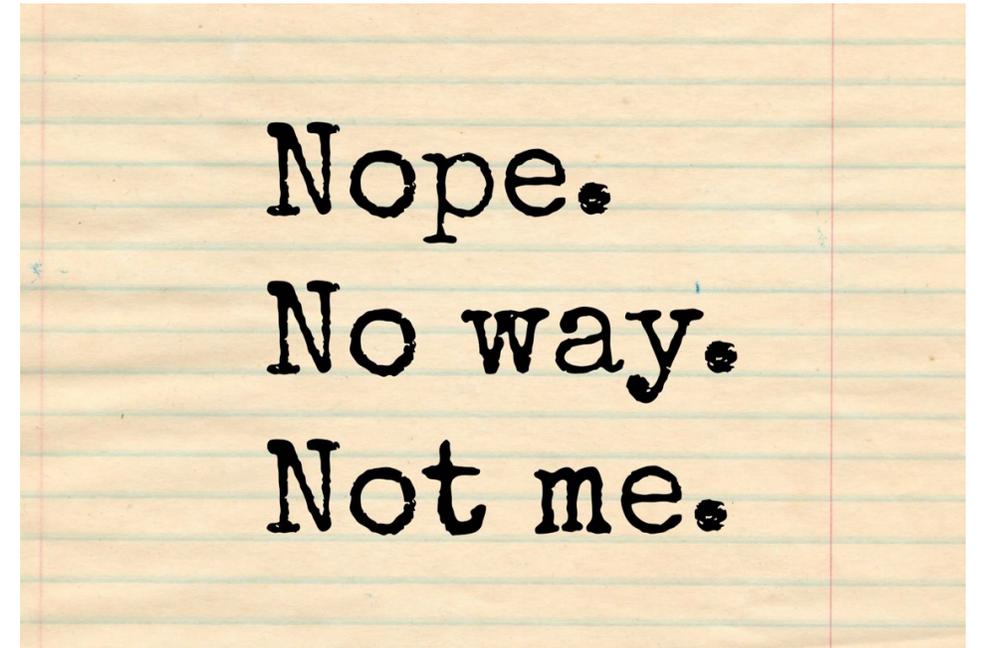


- Graduated from Illinois State University in 2013 (woot woot!)
- Began my career as Family Support Specialist at Children's Home and Aid in Carpentersville, IL in May of 2015
- I volunteer at my church in the Junior High Ministry and have surprisingly adapted many of the Preschool Expansion model components to the ministry, garnering positive results and family engagement



WHO I'M NOT

- Compliance Officer
- State's Family Engagement or Expansion Program Support Specialist
- Your Program Director/Principal/Superintendent, etc.



KEY CONCEPTS TO KNOW

- PDG (federal) and PFA-E (state) programs
- Family Support Specialist/Parent Educator/Home School Liaison/Family Educator/Parent-Community Support Resource Liaison, etc.
- ECBG Program Support Specialist
- Early Childhood Block Grant 3-5 Compliance Checklist
- ISBE Family Engagement Framework
- CQIP (Continuous Quality Improvement Plan)



COLLABORATE

- Local agencies
- Local school districts (kindergarten readiness, screenings, transition process)
- Early Childhood Collaboration (Innovation Zones)
- Early Childhood Initiative between providers



WHY DO WE DO WHAT WE DO?

Family Engagement Standards of Effective Practice

- Principle 1: Develop a Family Engagement System
- Principle 2: Build a Welcoming Environment
- Principle 3: Enhance Communication
- Principle 4: Include Parents in Decision Making

Illinois State Board of Education
Family Engagement Framework
A Guide for Illinois School Districts, Schools and Families



This guide brings together research, best practices, and program requirements and can be a resource for district/school leaders and families to use in planning, implementing, and evaluating family engagement practices that directly improve student outcomes.



Illinois State
Board of Education

DEVELOP A FAMILY ENGAGEMENT SYSTEM

- Don't reinvent the wheel- find out what your district/organization already has and work collaboratively
- Avoid duplicating services to the community by working alongside other early education programs (especially other full day preschool programs)
- Plan out family engagement during the spring of the previous year (so like...now)
card subject to change
- Include everyone in your team in this process #worklifebalance



Welcome Parents!

BUILD A WELCOMING ENVIRONMENT

- First impressions count and they follow you throughout the rest of your time with the family.
- This is OUR school. Make parents feel comfortable by opening your school's door to them and giving them plenty of opportunities to VOLUNTEER.
- Although we are not event planners, make sure that you make your events as welcoming as possible.



ENHANCE COMMUNICATION

- Find different ways to communicate with families (face to face, call, text, email, handouts, signs)
- Providing sources of communication will be key, even during winter time
- Enhancing communication not only with families, but with teachers and staff, as well.
- Goal setting (opportunity to grow-CQIP)



INCLUDE PARENTS IN DECISION MAKING

- **Parent Advisory Council (PAC)**
 - **Communicate with birth to age 3 programs to identify parents that might be considered an asset to your PAC**
 - **Create a transition system into and out of the PAC for parents**
 - **Create a system for your PAC that motivates parents to participate**
 - **Food shouldn't be seen as a must because they are hungry**
- **Volunteer**
- **Family Strengths and Needs Assessments**
 - **Setting realistic goals/expectations**



RESOURCES

- Trainings
 - StarNet
 - The Center: Resources for teaching and learning
- Online Resources
 - ISBE Early Childhood page
 - Hint...you will find the checklist here
 - National Center for Pyramid Model Innovations
 - (<https://challengingbehavior.cbcs.usf.edu/>)
 - ECLearning Workbench (<https://www.eclearningil.org/workbench>)
- Google Talk

WHAT?

WHY?

WHO?

HOW?

WHEN?

WHERE?

