

STRENGTHENING PARTNERSHIPS  
WITH FAMILIES  
(AKA – SMALL CHANGES/BIG IMPACT)

TWEETY YATES  
FEBRUARY 26, 2019

tyates2@illinois.edu

### How are our families doing?



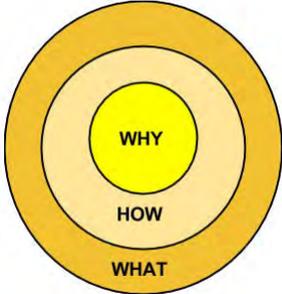
- How do we know?
- What are we doing about it?
- Is it enough to make a difference?

### IF... THEN

Parents should never feel like a “guest” in our schools.

3

### The Golden Circle



### Engaging Families

- More than 50 years of research tells us that family engagement is one of the **most powerful predictors** of children’s development, educational attainment, and success in school and life.
- Earn higher grades and test scores
- Enroll in higher level academic programs
- Are promoted on time and earn more credits
- Adapt better to school and attend more regularly
- Have better social skills and behaviors
- Graduate and go on to post-secondary opportunities



### Listen for...

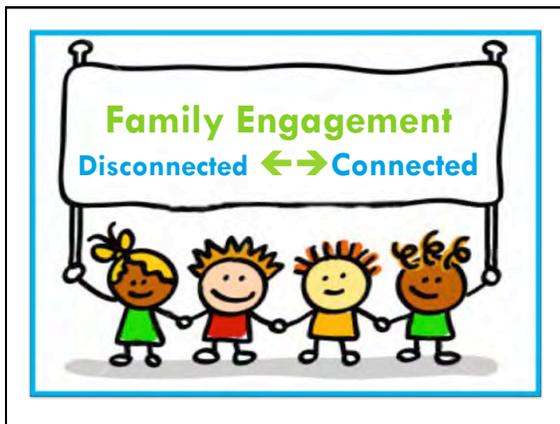
One **CRITICAL** piece of information that is **REALLY** important!

### Involvement vs Engagement

Involvement	Engagement
<p>When you “involve” families - ideas and suggestions come primarily from the school/ program.</p>	<p>When you “engage” families - ideas come primarily from the families and communities based on their needs and priorities. Families and educators work as partners to support and increase child learning.</p>
 <p>Doing to...</p>	 <p>Doing with...</p>

### Involvement vs Engagement

Involvement	Engagement
	
	 <p>Goal...not to serve families but to gain partners</p>



### 4 Types of Partnerships

- Fortress School
- Come-If-We-Call School
- Open-Door School
- Partnership School

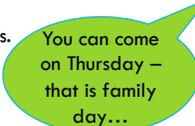
(Henderson, Mapp, Johnson & Davies, 2007)

### Fortress School

- Engaging with families is a low priority – not thought of as connected to child outcomes
- Standard family events held out of compliance (low turnout – so staff not enthusiastic about family engagement)
- “Parent’s don’t care about their children’s education.”
- “Parents don’t come to conferences no matter what we do.”
- Teachers feel family engagement is not their job – teaching and learning.
- Don’t share information about curriculum, standards, learning goals – “We don’t want to overwhelm families with information they won’t understand.”

### Come-If-We-Call School

- More positive about the concept of family engagement. – but the school sets the terms of engagement.
- Most of communication is one way – from school to home.
- Families only come to school when invited:
  - Fall open house to hear rules and expectations
- Workshops are planned by school staff without input from parents.
- Families can visit on designated days.



You can come on Thursday – that is family day...

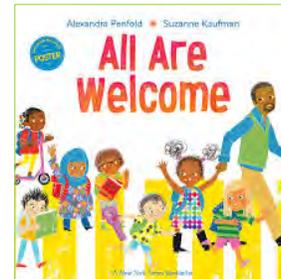
## Open-Door School

- Make family engagement a **priority** and see it as an important part of **child success**.
- **Targeted efforts** to reach out and invite families to be engaged
- **Parent-teacher conferences** held a few times a year.
- Family diversity is recognized through **multi-cultural events with translators**.
- Various **events are held for families** (literacy night)
- **Open-door policy** and protocol - families are welcomed to visit school

## Partnership School

- Family engagement isn't done out of compliance or because of mandates – seen as a **commitment and key component**
- Families seen as **true partners** in the teaching and learning process and **valued** as knowledgeable and important contributors.
- All **family events are connected** to child learning and development.
- **Parent-to-Parent** networks are valued and cultivated.
- Staff **intentional** about **developing relationships**.
- “We’re **ALL** family here: children, staff and families.”

## The Pyramid Model



## Interactive

- What happens at your open house?
  - “doing to”
  - “doing with”
- How can you make your open house more interactive?



## National Center on Pyramid Model Innovations (NCPMI) <https://challengingbehavior.cbcs.usf.edu>

### National Center on Pyramid Model Innovations (NCPMI)



**Teaching Your Child to Become Independent with Daily Routines**

*Does This Sound Familiar?*

**Teaching Your Child to Cooperate With Requests**

*Does This Sound Familiar?*



**Teaching Your Child to Cooperate With Requests**

*Does This Sound Familiar?*

### National Center on Pyramid Model Innovations (NCPMI)



**Backpack**  
Challenging Behavior Series

**How to Plan Activities to Reduce Challenging Behavior**

*Does This Sound Familiar?*



**Backpack**  
Communication Series

**How to Help Your Child Learn to Share**

*Does This Sound Familiar?*

### Family Routine Guides



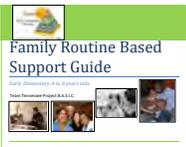
**Family Routine Based Support Guide**



**National Center on Pyramid Model Innovations**

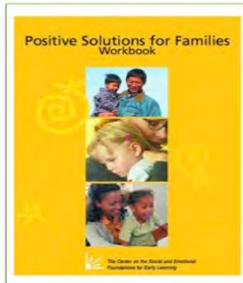


**Family Routine Guide**  
By Michelle Lachar and Lori Day



**Family Routine Based Support Guide**

### National Center on Pyramid Model Innovations (NCPMI)



**Positive Solutions for Families Workbook**

- Making a Connection!
- Making it Happen!
- Why Do Children Do What They Do?
- Teach Me What to Do!
- Facing the Challenge (Part 1)
- Facing the Challenge (Part 2)

### Resources



**NAEYC**

**Guiding Your Child's Behavior**

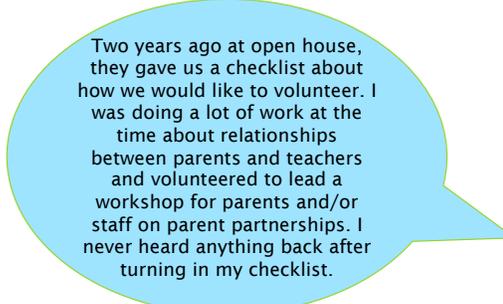


**Center on Early Literacy Learning**  
www.earlyliteracylearning.org

Let your preschooler **POP** Literacy Learning POWERS!

**MEALS AND SNACKS**

### Small Changes...BIG Impact



Two years ago at open house, they gave us a checklist about how we would like to volunteer. I was doing a lot of work at the time about relationships between parents and teachers and volunteered to lead a workshop for parents and/or staff on parent partnerships. I never heard anything back after turning in my checklist.

### Small Changes...BIG Impact

The next year, when I received the form again, I checked off that I would bake. I was called almost every month. My experience communicated to me that the school really wasn't interested in having me involved in anything of substance.

### Embracing the Voice of Families

- During a design thinking exercise in San Diego, families shared their stories with educators/administrators in their native languages, and school personnel listened to translations of their discussions — a reversal of the more common practice whereby families have to listen while school personnel speak to them via translators. Families felt empowered, and educators left with a better understanding of children and their families.



### Small Changes...BIG Impact!

- “Commit to choosing one child per day and sending a positive note home to parents with the back side of the note asking the parents to send a positive note back about their child. Even with a class of 30, that gives each child and family 6 notes or more during a school year. You would be amazed at what a little positivity will do to get parents engaged.”
- Dr. Kimberley Palmiotto

### Family Engagement



Play I Spy with your child when you are riding on the bus or in the car - “I spy something that rhymes with hat (cat)!”

### Expectations & Family Engagement

(Fox & Swett, 2017)

**Be Safe**  
**Be Responsible**  
**Be a Team Player**

Family Engagement?

### Expectations and Family Engagement

- Open House
  - Act out Expectations!
  - Scavenger Hunt
  - Set up activity where child introduced expectations




### Expectations and Family Engagement

- Family Roll Out Event or Playground Party & include Community Partners
  - Be Safe**  
(Firefighters discuss “be safe” and teach children to stop-drop-roll)
  - Be Responsible**  
(Librarian discusses “be responsible” and families invited to sign up for library cards)
  - Be a Team Player**  
(soccer players discuss being a team player and then everyone plays soccer)

### Make Tip Sheets

#### Be a Team Player

Send home tip sheets on how to promote the expectations at home in home routines. Make sure the tip sheets are in the languages of children in the program and include visuals that represent the racial and ethnic diversity of the program.



### Expectations and Family Engagement

- Send personal notes home that comment on the family strengths and efforts in supporting their child’s development.
- Do this with teachers or share a list of sample notes to make it easier for them to do.

Just wanted to share with you that I know you are working hard to teach James how to be a friend. Because of you, he is a great support to his peers.



### Expectations and Family Engagement




- Send home a brief video of the child demonstrating a skill or expectation. Have a few frames of the child speaking to their family in their native language about the skill or expectation.

### Expectations and Family Engagement

- Display expectations in your entryway and put up photos of the children and program staff engaging in expectations. Encourage families to submit pictures of families and children engaging in the expectations in the community and post them as well.



### Expectations and Family Engagement

- Encourage families to submit stories about their child using the expectations at home. They can write them down, call in to voice mail, or share them with a staff member.
- Put the stories in a jar and then have a drawing each month/week for a prize (e.g., children’s book, interactive toy, restaurant gift certificate).
- Collect the stories and create a newsletter to share with all or create a collage and post.



### Expectations and Family Engagement

---

**Cultural Fit**

- Find ways to support families in using the expectations at home that are a cultural fit for their families to link to expectations.

**Be Responsible**



### Expectations and Family Engagement

---

- Host a family night event where the families **experience** *"A day in the life of a preschool child."*
- Each room introduces a major activity (large group, small group, centers, outdoor play). Families rotate.
- Each activity begins with an introduction to expectations and rules for the activity.



### Expectations and Family Engagement

---

**Parent-Parent**

You want to know the secret to getting us to come – make sure we know we are genuinely invited.  
(parent of preschooler)



### Your Turn! Give One Get One!

---



### Involvement vs Engagement

---

**Involvement**

When you "involve" families - ideas and suggestions come primarily from the school/ program.



**Engagement**

When you "engage" families - ideas come primarily from the families and communities based on their needs and priorities. Families and educators work as partners to support and increase child learning.



### Hmmm...

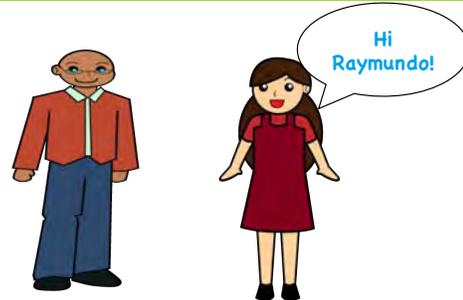
---

- What "message" does your program send to families?
- Would your families agree?

Role Play Time!

Small Changes...  
BIG Impact

Small Changes...BIG Impact!



Making deposits in Families Buckets

- What do you already do?
- What could you add?



Think outside the box

If we keep making assumptions about how we think families want to be involved, we will never get family engagement right!

Listen for...

One **CRITICAL** piece of information that is **REALLY** important!

**YOU!**