

ILLINOIS STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION

Preschool Expansion Program

Sample Family Goal Template

Date Completed: ___/___/___	Staff Member:
Parent Name:	Child Name:

Goal #1

Goal Category			
Specific Goal			
Step #1	<i>Follow up date:</i> ___/___/___	<i>Person responsible:</i>	
	<i>Action to be taken:</i>		
Step #2	<i>Follow up date:</i> ___/___/___	<i>Person responsible:</i>	
	<i>Action to be taken:</i>		
Support Needed:		Resources Offered:	
Follow Up Notes: (to be completed during follow-up conversations)	<i>Date:</i> ___/___/___	<i>Date:</i> ___/___/___	<i>Date:</i> ___/___/___
	<i>Progress to date:</i>	<i>Progress to date:</i>	<i>Progress to date:</i>
	<i>Support needed:</i>	<i>Support needed:</i>	<i>Support needed:</i>
	<i>Next steps:</i>	<i>Next steps:</i>	<i>Next steps:</i>

Goal #2

Goal Category			
Specific Goal			
Step #1	Follow up date: ___/___/___	Person responsible:	
	Action to be taken:		
Step #2	Follow up date: ___/___/___	Person responsible:	
	Action to be taken:		
Support Needed:		Resources Offered:	
Follow Up Notes: (to be completed during follow-up conversations)	Date: ___/___/___	Date: ___/___/___	Date: ___/___/___
	Progress to date:	Progress to date:	Progress to date:
	Support needed:	Support needed:	Support needed:
	Next steps:	Next steps:	Next steps:

Parent Signature:

Staff Signature:

Date: ___/___/___

Date: ___/___/___

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Family Goal-Setting -- Guidance

Family Assessment

Parent educators should conduct a family assessment with each child's primary caregiver(s) following enrollment to learn more about the needs of each family and their goals for the future. This information should be used to provide support and assistance to ensure that families are safe and able to meet their basic needs, empower families to set and achieve ambitious goals and refer families to appropriate community resources.

The Illinois Department of Human Services has developed a sample parent assessment template for use by Migrant and Seasonal Head Start programs that may offer a good starting point in developing an appropriate family assessment tool for your program. A copy may be downloaded here: <http://www.dhs.state.il.us/onenetlibrary/12/documents/Forms/IL444-4063.pdf>

Family assessment should be structured as a private conversation between the parent educator and the parent/guardian, rather than an interview. The assessment should serve as the foundation for developing an ongoing, open and trusting relationship between the program and family. Assessment documents and case notes should be maintained in confidential files.

Identify Goals

Each program should develop a strategy for empowering families to set goals and for supporting and documenting progress towards those goals. The sample form at the beginning of this document may be adapted and used for this purpose.

Goals should relate to the needs and interests that parents and guardians express during the family assessment process. The role of the parent educator is to facilitate the conversation, assist the primary caregiver(s) in setting the goal and helping them develop a realistic plan for achieving it, including referrals to resources.

Family goals should be:

Ambitious: Program staff should support parents and guardians in “dreaming big” about their goals for themselves and their children. Parent educators should partner with families to identify goals that will place the family on a trajectory towards a better life as they define it.

Attainable: Family goals should partner with families to recognize and build on their assets to achieve their goals. This may require parent educators to help parents and guardians translate long-term goals into a roadmap of short-term intermediate goals that lead towards the desired result.

In the template above, goals are divided into achievable steps. This approach helps break a larger goal (i.e. finding full-time employment) into smaller chunks (i.e. 1 – research job training programs, 2 – enroll in a training program, 3 – write a resume, etc.) that are measurable, allow for celebrations of progress and maintain momentum.

Prioritized: Families should be encouraged to pursue goals that address their most urgent needs first, establishing a foundation that will empower them to successfully achieve future goals. If a family is struggling to meet their basic needs (housing, food, safety from violence, etc.), the first goal should be focused on connecting the family to sustainable resources to address these challenges.

Goals should also be prioritized when one depends on the completion of another. For example, if a parent/guardian has not completed a GED, but is interested in pursuing a career that requires one, the first goal should be to pursue enrollment in a GED program.

Categorizing types of family goals may help provide a clear alignment with family assessment, program resources and community partnerships. The Head Start Parent, Family and Community Engagement Outcomes (referenced below) are one potential strategy for categorizing goals. Programs might also choose to categorize goals based on the area of focus, such as employment, housing, adult education, transportation, parenting strategies, health, etc.

Follow Up and Documentation

Once goals are established, parent educators should work with families to identify the types of support and resources they will need. If external resources are required, parent educators should make an active referral to the appropriate community partner and assist the parent or guardian in connecting with that resource.

Ongoing follow-up with parents and guardians is key to supporting their progress towards overcoming barriers and achieving their ambitious goals. Regular follow-up conversations should be scheduled to receive an update on the parent's progress, identify what additional support is needed and confirm the next step that will be taken towards their goal.

All contact with families concerning their goal and referrals to resources should be documented through case notes. These case notes should include:

- The date of contact and the expected date for the next conversation
- An update on the status of work towards the goal to date
- Planned next steps, the individuals responsible for each step and expected date of completion
- Any support that is needed and resources that are offered to meet those needs

Further Reading

The following resources were referenced in development of the above template and guidance:

- The Head Start Parent, Family and Community Engagement Framework is an excellent resource for understanding each of the parent and family engagement outcomes listed above. The Framework provides clear examples of strategies that program staff can use to support families: <http://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/hslc/standards/im/2011/pfce-framework.pdf>
- The City of Chicago's Department of Family and Support Services has compiled a resource page focused on tools and strategies to support high-quality family and community partnerships: <http://www.childserviceschicago.com/content-areas/family-and-community-partnerships#resources>
- The Puget Sound Educational Service District's Early Learning Program offers another template for assessing family needs and identifying a plan for program staff to support families towards meeting their goals: <http://old.earlylearningwa.org/images/WebSiteFiles/Head%20Start/Forms/Family%20Goals%20and%20Resources%20Worksheet.pdf>

Program Structure

The chart below has been adapted from “Using the Head Start Parent, Family, and Community Engagement Framework in Your Program: Markers of Progress,” a self-assessment and program planning tool developed by the National Center on Parent, Family and Community Engagement. Consider referring to this chart in developing strong program systems and approaches that promote parent engagement and comprehensive family support.

	STARTING POINT:	PROGRESSING:	INNOVATING:
<i>Staff partnerships with families grow and deepen.</i>	When families consent, Partnership Plans/Agreements are developed to help staff identify and use family strengths as the foundation of their relationship with them. A family’s decision not to create a plan is respected. Staff finds other opportunities to learn about the family’s strengths, needs, and goals as an entry to this relationship.	Staff and families meet regularly to update and expand Plans/Agreements. These changes reflect their joint efforts, progress, and new circumstances and opportunities.	Together, staff and families decide on the data they will use to monitor trends in family strengths, needs and goals. They use data to track their joint efforts and progress in reaching family outcomes. Learning to use data contributes to families’ success in supporting children’s development and learning. Using data together also strengthens parent-staff relationships.
<i>Parent educators help family members recognize their own contributions to their progress.</i>	Staff provides ongoing information and support to families in using program services and community resources (education, career development, health) to achieve family goals and promote the well-being of children.	Staff helps individual families see how their use of services leads to progress. They help families overcome challenges in achieving their goals.	Families and staff affirm the vital roles that families play in nurturing their children’s learning and development. Together, they acknowledge and celebrate family members’ growing knowledge and skills, and build upon these in their
<i>Family partnerships open the door to families’ use of resources and services.</i>	Staff develops trusting relationships with families that make for responsive family referrals and effective information-sharing about program and community services and resources.	Staff uses knowledge of families to tailor referrals to services based on the strengths, needs, and styles of individual family members.	Staff-family partnerships empower families to independently seek and use community services that are tailored to their strengths, needs and cultures.

Adapted from *The National Center on Parent, Family and Community Engagement*
<http://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/hslc/tta-system/family/docs/ncpfce-markers-of-progress.pdf>

Sample Goal

Goal Category	Adult education		
Specific Goal	Finish Associate's degree in social work at a local community college		
Step #1	Follow up date: <u>4 / 15 / 16</u>	Person responsible: Parent	
	Action to be taken: Obtain transcripts from previous college		
Step #2	Follow up date: <u>5 / 1 / 16</u>	Person responsible: Parent	
	Action to be taken: Complete application for financial aid		
Support Needed:	-Help completing FAFSA	Resources Offered:	-Referral to financial aid counselor
Follow Up Notes: (to be completed during follow-up conversations)	Date: <u>5 / 1 / 1</u>	Date: ____/____/____	Date: ____/____/____
	Progress to date: Transcripts received and FAFSA completed.	Progress to date:	Progress to date:
	Support needed: Childcare needed for afternoon and evening classes.	Support needed:	Support needed:
	Next steps: Parent educator making referral to Gold-rated early childhood program to care for child after Preschool Expansion hours.	Next steps:	Next steps: