

Link Families to Services and Opportunities

Why is it important?

Working with families to help them meet their health, social, psychological, economic, and career goals is an important part of shoring-up the well-being of children and their parents. By making a conscious effort to understand families' goals and needs, you can connect families to different supports that will assist them with achieving those goals and filling their own needs.

Fill out the self-assessment below based on your interactions with families

		I do this	I don't do this	I'd like to try this
1.	I ask parents about the needs and goals they have for themselves and their children.			
2.	Parents have access to up-to-date information about services that are available in the community that includes hours of business, fees, location, eligibility, language capacity, etc.			
3.	I actively build collaborative links with other service professionals in order to share information with parents about resources.			
4.	I encourage parents to share information about community resources for families – such as toy exchanges, resale shops, play lots, family activities, and more formal services.			
5.	Brainstorm with families about what resources would be helpful.			
6.	I provide parents information and guidance on:			
	a. Transitioning children to school.			
	b. The importance of parents staying involved with their children's education and school.			
7.	Try to make a personal connection between families and service professionals.			
8.	Follow up with families to see if they used the referral and ensure that they were satisfied with the services they received.			
9.	I connect parents to opportunities that promote:			
	a. Their continued growth and development, i.e. work force development or education services.			
	b. Family enrichment, i.e., reading hours at the library, parent-child book groups, cultural heritage events.			
	c. Economic stability, i.e. financial counseling, housing services.			
	d. Their health and wellness.			

Based on your responses how do you link parents to services and/or opportunities?

What item do you feel would be difficult? Why? _____

In the table below, create a plan for an activity or practice for linking parents to services and opportunities. (Note that the self-assessment you completed may give you an idea. Refer to the Sample Action Plan at the end of this section.)

PROPOSED ACTIVITY/PRACTICE:			
Steps	Time Frame	Owner(s)	Supplies needed
OUTCOMES: (What were your results? Number of parents attended, engagement level of parents, did parents interact with each other, etc.)	SUGGESTIONS FOR IMPROVEMENT:		

SAMPLE ACTION PLAN

PROPOSED ACTIVITY/PRACTICE: Cultures in our Classroom			
Steps	Time Frame	Owner(s)	Supplies needed
Notify the administrator and set the date of the event.	July 12 th	Lead- Angie Assistant-Bob Administrator - Candy	cups plates plastic silverware napkins tablecloths arts and craft supplies Drinks Snacks Decorations
Inform parents/encourage parents to share cultural customs.	July 14 th	Lead-Angie	
Create a sign-up sheet.	July 17 th	Assistant-Bob	
Plan activities.	July 21 st	Lead-Angie	
Purchase supplies (refreshments).	July 26 th	Administrator-Candy	
Host event.	July 28 th	Lead- Angie Assistant-Bob Administrator-Candy	
OUTCOMES: <i>(What were your results? Number of parents attended, engagement level of parents, did parents interact with each other, etc.)</i> Parents talked to one another and found similarities with cultural customs. 4 families shared their cultural foods. 7 families attended with 11 children in total. 2 families scheduled play dates with their children.		SUGGESTIONS FOR IMPROVEMENT: Include other leads and their participation in the event. Personally call all families to invite them to the event and bring something to represent their culture. Send out reminder calls the day before. Plan icebreaker activity.	