Family Engagement: Vital to Success of Early Childhood Programs
Focused on Ages 3 to 8 years
Presented by Julie P. Culhane, Ph.D.

Today’s One-Hour Agenda

1. Why Engage Families?
   - Team Approach to Understanding Children
   - Levels of Engagement
   - A Cautionary Tale

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Team Approach

Family View + Educator View

= Whole Child View

I dreamed I stood in a studio
And watched two sculptors there.
The clay they used was a young child's mind
And they fashioned it with care.
One was a teacher, the tools he used
Were books, music and art.
The other a parent, with a guiding hand
And loving, gentle heart.
Day after day, the teacher toiled
With touch that was deft and sure,
While the parent labored by his side
And polished and smoothed it o'er.
And when at last their task was done
They were proud of what they wrought.
For the things they had molded into a child
Could neither be sold nor bought.
And each agreed they would have failed
If each had worked alone.
For behind the parent stood a teacher
And behind the teacher a home.

Author unknown

Levels of Engagement

- Outreach
- Consultation
- Involvement
- Collaboration
- Shared Leadership
A Cautionary Tale

Outreach – Screening
Consultation – Aside
Involvement – Suggestion
Collaboration – Decision
Shared Leadership – Changed

Take a poll

How many of you have experienced a “cautionary tale” of your own that has changed the way you engage with families?

Please respond by selecting:

☐ YES  or
☐ No

Select your response on the following polling page.
Today’s One-Hour Agenda

Part 1  Why engage families?
Part 2  The language we use
Part 3  Reasonable expectations
Part 4  Keeping in touch

2. The Language We Use

Define “engagement”
Be honest
Can-Do terms
People-first descriptions

Define Engagement

1. Agreement to marry
2. Commitment to attend
3. Short job
4. Battle
5. Active or operational state
Can-Do Terms

What can she do?

People-First

Child with autism
  autistic child

Family on low income
  low-income family

Girl with motor challenges or differently able
  disabled girl
People-First
Child with autism
Family on low income
Girl with motor challenges or differently able
disabled girl
Be Honest

Honesty is the best policy

Summary Statement

Steven is so quiet it’s hard to know what he thinks about. He interacts well with his friends & is respectful of their opinions. But, he doesn’t show any eagerness to learn, or participate in groups. Steven daydreams instead of asking for help.

General Principles of “CAN-DO”

- Be factual (what you see or hear)
- Avoid : BUT, NEVER, DOESN’T
- Give comments the “flip test”
- Compliment in conversation, goal-set in writing.
Steven’s strength is how well he interacts with his friends & is respectful of their opinions. Because he’s so quiet it’s hard to know what he feels about classroom activities or when he needs help. Our goals are to get him interested and participating in groups. We’ll work together so Steven knows how and when to ask for help.

To Review
Read the following and respond by choosing: A, B, C, or D
Which general principle of CAN-DO are you most likely use?
A. Give comments the “flip test”
B. Avoid: BUT, NEVER, DOESN’T
C. Put goals in writing; put compliments in conversation
D. Be factual (what you see or hear)

Your Questions So Far
• Please enter into the chat box any questions you have about engaging with families.
• I will answer more questions near the end of the presentation.
Today’s One-Hour Agenda

Part 1: Why engage families?
Part 2: The language we use
Part 3: Reasonable expectations
Part 4: Keeping in touch

Example from Scientific Thinking

How does a child develop from being able to:

“Observe weather and seasonal changes.”

to

“Explore the impact of natural processes and human activity on the environment.”

?
## Age 3 – 8 Indicators of development

**Preschool**: Observes weather and seasonal changes.

**Kindergarten**: Begins to observe and describe weather and seasonal changes and looks for patterns.

**First Grade**: Observes and describes weather and seasonal changes and looks for patterns.

**Second Grade**: Identifies patterns in weather and seasonal changes.

**Third Grade**: Explores the impact of natural processes and human activity on the environment.

## Age Indicators

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Indicators</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3 years</td>
<td>Explores how objects and materials move.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 years</td>
<td>Explores how objects and materials move in different circumstances.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 years</td>
<td>Observes, investigates, and describes force, motion and stability.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 years</td>
<td>Observes, investigates, and describes the influence of forces in motion and stability of objects and materials.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7 years</td>
<td>Observes, investigates, and describes the influence of forces in motion and stability of objects and materials.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8 years</td>
<td>Observes, investigates, and describes the influence of forces in motion and stability of objects and materials.</td>
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</tbody>
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## Today’s One-Hour Agenda

1. **Part 1**: Why engage families?
2. **Part 2**: The language we use
3. **Part 3**: Reasonable expectations
4. **Part 4**: Keeping in touch
4. Keeping in Touch

The A, B, Cs of a productive meeting.

- Agree on a time and place
- Be clear on the purpose
- Come prepared

Your questions

- Please enter in the Chat Box any questions you might have about engaging with families.
- I will answer as many as time allows. The remaining questions will be answered offline.
Suggested Resources


Thank you - Gracias

Thank you for attending today. I look forward to the next time.

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