



FAMILY ENGAGEMENT: IN PROGRAM LEADERSHIP

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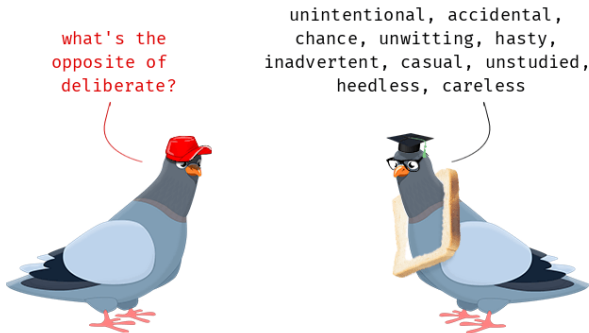
"True family involvement requires an infrastructure that brings family voice to every nook and cranny of a system, ensuring that parents are heard at every table, at all levels where decisions are made about policies, services and supports that affect them and their children."

Jane Kallal
Parent, Founder, Executive Director
Family Involvement Center

WHAT IS FAMILY ENGAGEMENT?



WE ALL WANT TO
ENGAGE FAMILIES,
BUT DO WE?



what's the opposite of deliberate?

unintentional, accidental, chance, unwitting, hasty, inadvertent, casual, unstudied, heedless, careless

Be deliberate about your intention to meaningfully engage families rather than to simply have them participate.

WHY PARENT LEADERSHIP IS CRITICAL



- Parents/primary caregivers **PROVIDE A PERSPECTIVE** critical to the successful development of effective policies and practices
- Parents/primary caregivers can **IDENTIFY CURRENT GAPS** while suggesting possible solutions
- **COMMUNITIES ARE STRENGTHENED** when the voice of parents is listened to, heard and valued
- Parent voice and leadership is **ESSENTIAL IN SYSTEM TRANSFORMATION** efforts

WHAT FAMILIES BRING TO LEADERSHIP

- Families contribute an **AUTHENTIC** perspective regarding the value and relevance of protocols, activities, and services
- Families bring a **UNIQUE** perspective on navigating and understanding service delivery systems
- Families help **AVOID** problem areas that **only** they know
- Families **TRUST** peers
- Parent experiences are **HOLISTIC**
- Parents are **PASSIONATE**



DO WE BELIEVE THIS?



"NOTHING ABOUT US WITHOUT US"

AT MY ORGANIZATION FAMILIES ARE INVOLVED IN . . .

- The hiring process
- Co-leading training at all levels
- Decision making – there is a family member on the board or at the highest level of decision making
- Evaluation – in the design of the evaluation
- Evaluation – in the engaging of families to participate in
- Recruitment – of families to our programs and services

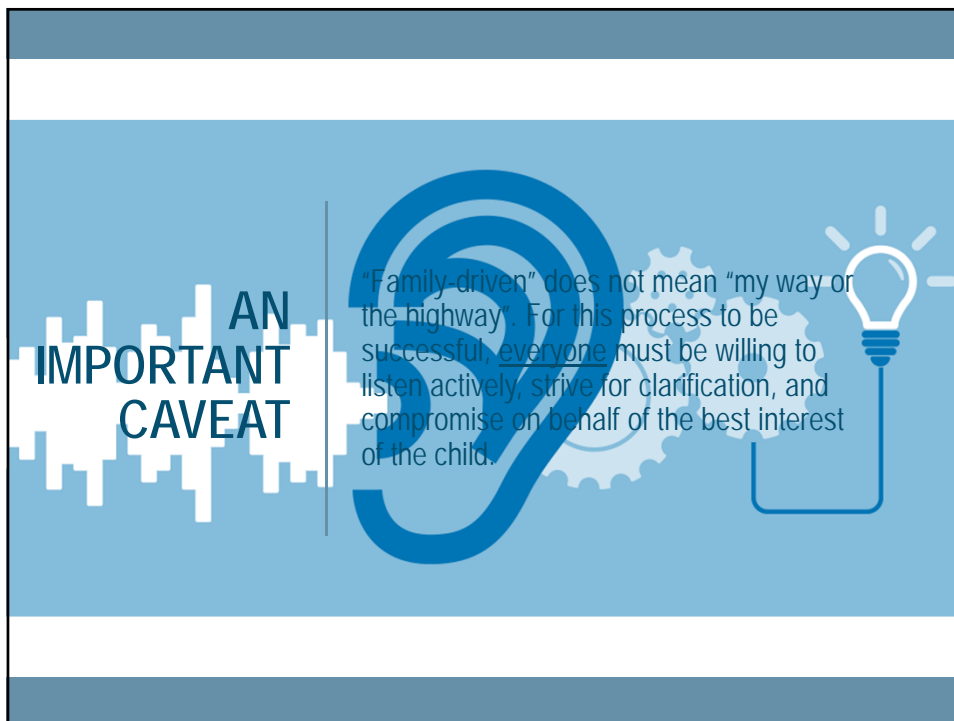
IF WE BELIEVE IN THE VALUE OF FAMILY VOICE



Family Voice should be represented in . . .

- Hiring
- Training
- Leadership Boards
- Evaluation

**THERE SHOULD BE NO DECISION ABOUT
THE PROGRAM WITHOUT FAMILY VOICE**



**AN
IMPORTANT
CAVEAT**

"Family-driven" does not mean "my way or the highway". For this process to be successful, everyone must be willing to listen actively, strive for clarification, and compromise on behalf of the best interest of the child.

CULTURAL SHIFT...WE CAN DO IT!

Expertise

Who has a better understanding of the cutting-edge services and supports that are available than the professionals who have dedicated their lives to improving outcomes for children?

Expertise

Who knows better which strategies have the best chance of success than a person raising a child with behavioral health challenges?





**FAMILY ENGAGEMENT IN PARENT-PROFESSIONAL
PARTNERSHIPS REQUIRE COMMITMENT**

BASIC VALUES OF PARENT- PROFESSIONAL PARTNERSHIPS

- Mutual respect for people's time
- Genuine concern for one another
- Willingness to be human and vulnerable
- Communication of honest feelings and opinions in a positive, effective manner
- Valuing the opinions of one another
- An awareness of and empathy for the feelings and responsibilities of others
- Willingness to learn from each other
- Continuous desire to improve and learn together



INDIVIDUAL AND ORGANIZATIONAL COMMITMENT

Individual Commitment

- See parents as having valuable expertise
- Help identify parent leaders - think recruitment when you're working
- Build their confidence - plant the seeds and encourage parents to consider sharing their stories in order to promote hope, resilience and recovery for others

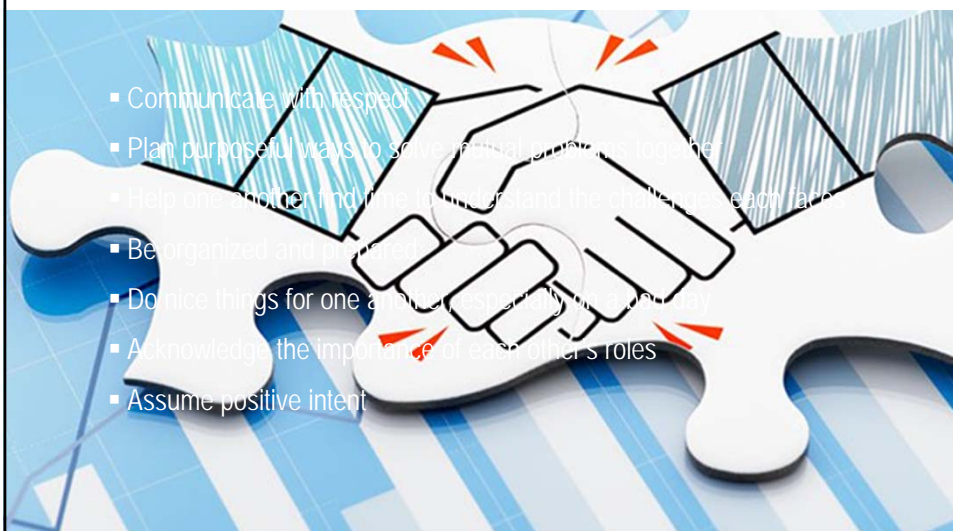
Organizational Commitment

- Clarify expectations of parent roles with other team members
- Include parents in screening and hiring processes
- Build a culture that welcomes and supports parents in partnership



WAYS TO PROMOTE AUTHENTIC PARTNERSHIP

- Communicate with respect
- Plan purposeful ways to solve mutual problems together
- Help one another find time to understand the challenges each face
- Be organized and prepared
- Do nice things for one another, especially on a regular basis
- Acknowledge the importance of each other's roles
- Assume positive intent



WAYS TO PROMOTE PARTNERSHIP CONTINUED

- Have regular meetings or appointments with one another to "keep in touch"
- Engage in informal communication with one another
- Offer solutions to one another instead of criticizing or complaining
- Recognize and utilize the expertise of one another
- Find opportunities to participate together in special events outside the typical work setting
- Model strength and resilience in all interactions

GROUND RULES AS SIMPLE AS

1

Everyone brings expertise to the table and will be treated with respect

2

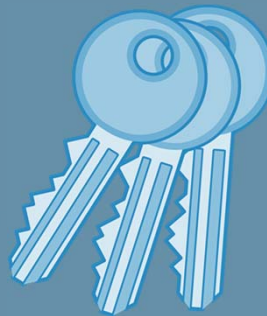
Flexible meeting times that meet everyone's schedule

3

This is a team effort, and everyone is on the same team

KEYS TO STRONG PARENT PROFESSIONAL PARTNERSHIPS

- Effective communication
- Shared power
- Honesty and transparency
- Respect
- Ability to acknowledge each other's expertise
- Working toward a common goal
- Emphasis on solutions instead of causes
- Interactions that are positive and proactive
- Ability to question each other's thinking and disagree openly
- Ability to be real with each other
- Relationships are **Key to Success!**



HOW DO WE ENGAGE FAMILIES?

HOW DO WE ENGAGE FAMILIES?

Work

- Work with families from the beginning to help plan your outreach and engagement strategies.

Start

- Start at the beginning. Strive to create a balanced relationship at the initial meeting.

Be

- Be deliberate about your intention to meaningfully engage families rather than to simply have them participate.

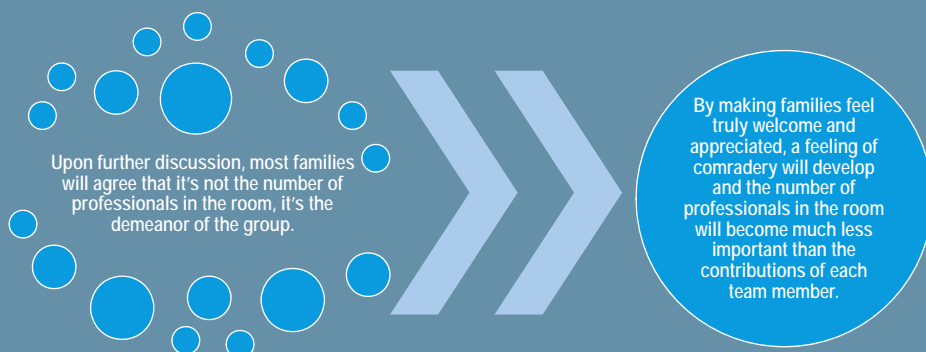
Acknowledge


- Acknowledge the unique expertise of diverse families. They know things that you don't and won't without them.

Recognize

- Recognize the unique knowledge and information possessed by families.


RELATIONSHIPS MATTER





Some one can be involved by being at every meeting, but not be engaged in meaningful partnership.

INVOLVEMENT AND ENGAGEMENT ARE DIFFERENT



You want all members of your leadership team to be BOTH.


BARRIERS FOR FAMILIES

Barriers

- Transportation
- Childcare
- Work obligations
- Scheduling conflicts
- Bad weather
- Dinner

Do your meetings address those barriers?

- Are meeting times flexible?
- Where do they take place?
- Are families reimbursed?
- Do you provide childcare?
- What about dinner?



WHAT MAKES FAMILIES FEEL DISENGAGED?

- When they feel their ideas and issues are not heard, validated or **most importantly implemented**.
- When they feel you are not really listening.
- If they don't trust you enough to share information or 'partner' with you.
- Clinical language/phrases, for example too much focus on 'Stage of Change' can make families feel uninformed, intimidated or worse.
- When you display "disinterested body language, for example have arms crossed, texting/answering phone, or fiddling with paperwork or files while parent is talking.
- Interrupting parent to talk about something unrelated to what the parent was/is talking about.



FAMILIES FEEL MORE ENGAGED WHEN

- They feel welcome
- They feel like they are making a difference
- They feel like they have some control, equal voice
- Meeting times and spaces are convenient to their schedule, not just paid staff
- They are treated with respect, as an equal at the table



SUMMARY SLIDE

- Family engagement is critical to our success serving youth and families
- Families can help identify gaps AND solutions and bring a unique perspective to effective policies and practices
- Family engagement requires individual and organizational commitment, shared responsibility and mutual respect
- Barriers and strategies for authentic parent professional partnerships were shared
- The National Federation of Families for Children's Mental Health is here for you as a resource

Q AND A

Please feel free to ask us any questions.



UNIQUE OPPORTUNITY TO EXPAND YOUR UNDERSTANDING ON FAMILY VOICE



- The 31st NFFCMH Conference will be held in Chicago, Illinois November 12 - 14, 2020.
- This is the nation's largest conference of family advocates promoting family voice and inclusion in every aspect of care.

[HTTPS://WWW.FFCMH.ORG/ONLINE-LEARNING](https://www.ffcmh.org/online-learning)

The National Federation of Families for Children's Mental Health developed this free course to help you understand the value and importance of engaging families in the evaluation of mental health services.



REFERENCES AND RESOURCES

National Federation of Families for Children's Mental Health

- <https://www.ffcmh.org/>

Our thanks to Family Involvement Center for content contributions.

- <http://familyinvolvementcenter.org/>

Principles of Family Engagement

- <https://www.naeyc.org/resources/topics/family-engagement/principles>

Engaging Parents, Developing Leaders A Self-Assessment and Planning Tool for Nonprofits and Schools

- <https://www.aecf.org/resources/engaging-parents-developing-leaders/>

Parent Engagement and Leadership Assessment Guide and Toolkit

- <https://cssp.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/04/Parent-Engagement-and-Leadership-Assessment-Guide-and-Toolkit-FINAL.pdf>

11 Tips for Success When Working Together by ACMH

- <http://www.acmh-mi.org/get-help/collaborating-with-the-professionals-working-with-my-family/parent-professional-partnership-tip-sheet/>

Family Engagement: Ideas and Insights to Inform Partnerships with Families

- http://bkc-od-media.vmlhost.psu.edu/documents/HO_FamilyEngagement.pdf

THANK YOU

Feel free to contact us with questions or for more information.

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