

Family Engagement Activities: Families as Important Key Partners



Family Initiated

At School District or Program Management Level

- Answer and return program and school surveys asking for input about help you would like to support your child's development and learning.
- Attend family activities and trainings that support families as lifelong educators.
- Volunteer to work in the classroom or community to support oral language and math skill development in young children.

At School or Program

- Begin early communications with your child's school or early learning program about how you can support early oral language and math skills development.
- Request teacher and program conferences to discuss your child's progress.
- Ask your child's teacher about mathematical concepts he or she is learning in school.

At Home

- Exercise your child's brain – talk with your child about the world; interact with your child often; be sensitive to your child's needs; and stimulate all your child's senses.
- Use communication to help manage your child's behaviors and emotions by offering explanations and praising the behavior, not the child.
- Help develop your child's oral language by naming and describing objects, naming your child's actions, and maintaining your child's attention on what interests him.
- Talk with your children about mathematical ideas in math language such as “how *many* do you need?” and “how *many* sides does that shape have?”
- Create and engage in meaningful mathematical activities such as having your child throw a basketball and count how many times the ball goes through the hoop.
- Play games that require math like board games with spinners and dice and card games that involve numbers.
- Use books to support mathematical development such as counting books and asking questions while reading mathematical books like “how many kittens on this page?” or “how many paws do you think they have together?”

Family Engagement Activities: Families as Important Key Partners

School/Program Initiated

At School District or Program Management Level

- Identify systems, supports, and resources to promote professional development and continuous quality improvement, the school/program environment, and partnerships related to families as lifelong educators.
- Incorporate strategies that support families as lifelong educators into school and program strategic frameworks and work plans.
- Support collaborative activities between schools, programs, and the community to strengthen family literacy programs.
- Conduct surveys to inform activities that help parents and caregivers support child learning and development.

At School or Program

- Facilitate meetings between families, teachers and staff to share information about child learning and development.
- Welcome families to observe and participate in their child's classroom or to do home-based activities.
- Provide opportunities for families to share tips for everyday learning practices.
- Support relationships between families and their children as part of foundational interactions around early oral language and math skills.

At Home

- Promote regular, effective, two-way communication with families about mathematical concepts their child is learning in school.
- Promote regular, effective, two-way communication with families about grade level reading expectations for their child.
- Provide information about how families can support oral language and math skills development at home with their children.
- Keep families informed on child progress through modes of communication and languages preferred by families.
- Call families early in the school or program year to report something positive about their child's oral language or math skills development.
- Provide a resource library that families can easily access and use to support their role as their child's lifelong educator.

A SMART CHILD IS NOT BORN; HE IS MADE!



Experiences in the **first 3 years of life** help your child build a **strong** brain and establish a **foundation for learning**



EXERCISE YOUR CHILD'S BRAIN!



Help him strengthen neural connections by:

- **Talking to him** about the world
- **Interacting** with him often
- **Being sensitive** to his needs
- **Stimulating** all of his senses

SPEND QUALITY TIME WITH YOUR CHILD EVERYDAY!



Your child will be more **cooperative**, he will trust you more, and he will have a higher self-esteem



RESPOND WARMLY TO YOUR CHILD'S SIGNALS!



- Your child uses **signals** to **communicate with you**
- Signals can be **positive** or **negative**
- Learn to recognize them and **respond immediately** and **sensitively**

HELP YOUR CHILD TO BE CONFIDENT AND TO FEEL SAFE!



Talk to him, **listen** to him, give him **choices**, and help him to **express himself**



USE COMMUNICATION TO HELP MANAGE YOUR CHILD'S BEHAVIORS & EMOTIONS!



- Offer **options** & **explanations**
- **Praise the behavior**, not the child
- **Talk** about **feelings**
- Give **1-2 step directions**
- **Say "no"** less often

BE THE PERSON YOUR CHILD COMES TO WHEN HE NEEDS TO TALK!



Starting early establishes the **foundation** for a **good relationship** for the rest of your lives



HELP DEVELOP YOUR CHILD'S ORAL LANGUAGE!



- **Name** and **describe** objects
- **Name** your child's **actions**
- **Maintain** your child's **attention** on what interests him
- When you talk, make sure you each take **at least 3 turns talking** back and forth

Family Engagement Activities: Being Ready for School

School/Program Initiated

At School District or Program Management Level

- Identify systems, supports, and resources to promote professional development and continuous quality improvement, and partnerships related to child and family transitions including engaging families as partners in transition planning.
- Incorporate strategies that support families in successful child transitions into school/program strategic frameworks and work plans.
- Conduct joint transition trainings across early learning, elementary schools and local education agencies.

At School or Program

- Engage families in transition planning through information, orientations, trainings and connections to future early learning and school sites.
- Administer the DRDP-SR to inform child readiness.
- Discuss child assessment data regularly with families.
- Help families understand quality rating criteria.
- Encourage families to attend parent group meetings to learn more about sites, develop leadership skills, and make a difference in their community.
- Encourage families to volunteer and participate in their child's classroom.
- Provide families opportunities to share what support, resources, and training they believe will help them become more confident and active leaders in their child's school and their community.
- Provide advocacy training for families to develop and use advocacy skills in the context of their role as lifelong educators.
- Train staff to be responsive and respectful to the cultural practices of the families they serve.

At Home

- Identify the tools, resources and skills families need to achieve a family's plan goals.
- Promote open, respectful communication with families such as increasing family understanding about separation and family dynamics and how they impact a child, parent and others as children transition; use active listening techniques.
- Keep families informed on their child's progress in achieving transition milestones.
- Inform families about their rights under federal and state laws such as the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act.
- Coordinate services for families transitioning between learning environments through program-school partnerships.

Family Engagement Activities: Being Ready for School

Family Initiated

At School District or Program Management Level

- Answer and return school and program surveys asking for input about help you would like to support your child's successful transition from an early learning program to school.
- Become a co-trainer of staff on challenges, hopes and dreams families have for their children.
- Use community resources that are available to support you and your child during transitions.

At School or Program

- Begin early communications with your child's school or early learning program about transition requirements.
- Schedule a meeting with your child's early learning program to develop a transition plan.
- Become a partner with your child's early learning and elementary school teacher by communicating and meeting regularly to discuss your child's developmental and learning progress.
- Seek out community resources that may support your child and your family in reaching developmental milestones.
- Share your family's values, beliefs, and culture with program and school staff.
- Connect with other families whose children are transitioning to share knowledge and information.
- Volunteer at your child's program or school.

At Home

- Develop a "Family Plan" that includes goals for the home, school, and community that you would like to achieve for yourself, your children and entire family.
- Visit early learning programs and elementary schools that your child may attend before enrollment to assess how they will meet your family's hopes and dreams.
- Ask your child's current early learning program to suggest activities you can do in the home with your child that will prepare him or her for a successful transition between learning environments.
- Make an appointment with your early learning program and local school to learn about readiness milestones and what resources are available to prepare and assist you and your child through the transition.

Family Engagement Activities: Home-Site Connections



Family Initiated

At School District or Program Management Level

- Attend school and program trainings on how to support your child's progress through family engagement activities and home-based academic enrichment activities.
- Get involved in local community programs and events as volunteers and participants.
- Learn about community resources, services and opportunities that can the success of your child and family.

At School or Program

- Attend school and program enrollment and orientation sessions.
- Let teachers and program staff know your preferred way and language for communicating about your child's progress - do you prefer phone calls, emails, or written communications?
- Attend school or program events that offer opportunities to connect with other families to share goals, information, ideas, and support.
- Request conferences with the school or program to learn about your child's progress or when you have questions or concerns.

At Home

- Write down your family values, goals and dreams – keep a journal on your family's progress.
- Create structures and routines that promote growth and learning like reading to your child and limiting TV watching and video games.
- Use daily activities with your child at home that support the healthy development and learning goals for your child.
- Communicate with teachers and program staff about questions or concerns you have.
- Model a commitment to learning by promoting lifelong learning and pathways to college.

Family Engagement Activities: Home-Site Connections



School/Program Initiated

At School District or Program Management Level

- Conduct an annual assessment to understand family and staff needs for effective home-site connections.
- Create family volunteer opportunities.
- Create an awards program to recognize family engagement successes by staff and families.
- Develop collaborative partnerships with community-based organizations, local business, educational institutions and others to leverage resources to support healthy, engaged families.

At School or Program

- Integrate the SCCOE Early Learning Master Plan Family Engagement & Leadership Principles within your school or program policies, practices, and professional development.
- Provide opportunities for participation, leadership, and co-learning team building between families and staff.
- Provide families with the knowledge to understand the importance of engagement to their child's success.
- Provide families opportunities to share what resources, support, and training they believe will help them become more confident, active leaders in their child's school and community.

At Home

- Introduce families to child development, ages and stages of development and core academic standards to promote supportive practices at home.
- Give families regular communication about their child's activities and progress in their preferred language and way of communication.
- Recognize families as assets in strengthening relationships with families.
- Share data, learning frameworks, and best practices with families to reinforce high expectations for program/school quality and success.



Family Engagement Activities to Support School and Home-Based Academic Enrichment Activities: Using Foundations of Preschool and Common Core Standards

At the District

School-Initiated Activities

- Create a comprehensive district volunteer program that includes participation in county-wide trainings with parent engagement stakeholders and trainers.
- Conduct an annual needs assessment to identify parent training needs.
- Schedule year round parent engagement trainings that include school and home-based academic enrichment activities.
- Evaluate parent engagement program impact on student performance.
- Create an awards program for parent leaders.

Family-Initiated Activities

- Participate in county-wide trainings with parent engagement stakeholders and trainers.
- Complete a district's annual needs assessment to identify parent training needs.
- Attend and support the development of district and school-based parent engagement trainings that include school and home-based academic enrichment activities.
- Review the results of the program and the impact on student performance.
- Participate in an awards program for parent leaders.

At School Level

School-Initiated

- Using a value shield chart, guide parents to list values and illustrate an effective parent engagement volunteer program at the school.
- Provide teacher trainings on how to develop a classroom parent volunteer program that includes a job description for parents, a classroom volunteer contract for parents to sign, and a parent observation form to observe students when completing school-based academic enrichment activities that can be reinforced at home when parents play with their children.
- Train parents in how they can support a parent volunteer program in the classroom using academic enrichment kits with scripts and train student ambassadors to guide small group academic kit activities while parents observe students and support learning.
- Schedule parents to complete six sessions of the classroom parent volunteer program using preschool foundations and common core standards.
- Organize an awards event with a certificate for each parent that completes six sessions in the classroom parent volunteer program.

At School Level *Continued*

Family-Initiated

- Using a value shield chart, parents can list values and illustrate an effective parent engagement volunteer program at the school.
- Review a job description for a parent volunteer, sign the classroom volunteer contract, and complete parent observation forms when observing students completing school-based academic enrichment activities that can be reinforced at home when parents play with their children.
- Participate in the parent volunteer program in the classroom using academic enrichment kits with scripts and observation forms.
- Complete six sessions of the classroom parent volunteer program using preschool foundations and common cores standards.
- Participate in the school's awards event for completing six sessions of the classroom parent volunteer program.

At Home

School-Initiated

- Train parents on how they can significantly impact their child's learning and career planning.
- Provide examples of how parents can partner with the schools at various leadership levels including participation in the classroom.
- Demonstrate and give examples on how parents can use preschool foundations and common core standards to support their child's learning at school and through play at home.
- Demonstrate and give examples of daily activities at home that can reinforce academic learning in all subject areas.
- Provide parents with community resources that can support academic learning.

Family-Initiated

- Participate in trainings on how parents can significantly impact their child's learning and career planning.
- Participate as a parent leader at the school and in the classroom.
- Use preschool foundations and common core standards to support a child's learning at school and through play at home.
- Use daily activities with a child at home that can reinforce academic learning in all subject areas.
- Use community resources with a child that can support academic learning.



Think about what you have learned today and...

Partnership

The reciprocal relationship between families and staff is one of equality and respect, resulting in the creation of a mutually beneficial partnership. Success comes from promoting the excellence of all partners.

Family Strengths

Families are assets, not barriers to overcome or work around. They are vital resources to themselves, to one another, and to programs.

...write down some activities you could do under each of these family engagement & leadership principles...

Shared Leadership and Power

Families and staff are partners in decisions that affect children and families and together inform, influence, and create policies, practices, and programs.

Child Success

Families, staff, and community members collaborate to advocate that children have access to opportunities that equitably support their success and healthy development.

...to make the hopes and dreams for our children come true.



Santa Clara County
Office of Education

**Santa Clara County Family Engagement and Leadership Institute
April 27, 2013
Workshop Evaluation**

We value your opinion. Please take a moment to fill out this form. Thank you!

Part I: Please tell us which workshop you attended by checking the box below.

- ☐ **Workshop #1: Families as Important Partners: Building Early Language and Math Skills**
- ☐ **Workshop #2: Advocating for Children's Needs and Two-Way Communication**
- ☐ **Workshop #3: Early School Success: Fostering Effective Home-Site Connections**

Part II - Please circle the number that most closely represents your response to today's Santa Clara County Family Engagement and Leadership Institute Workshop.

1=Strongly Disagree

2=Disagree

3=Agree

4=Strongly Agree

I increased my understanding about my role in family partnerships.

1

2

3

4

I learned about new family partnership activities that I can try at home or in my community.

1

2

3

4

Part III – Please write your responses below.

Please tell us two things that you learned today:

1. _____

2. _____

Please list two activities that you will take to support children in your community:

1. _____

2. _____



**Santa Clara County Family Engagement and Leadership Institute Evaluation
April 27, 2013**

We value your opinion. Please take a moment to fill out this form. Thank you!

**Part I - Please circle the number that most closely represents your response to today's
Santa Clara County Family Engagement and Leadership Institute.**

1=Strongly Disagree

2=Disagree

3=Agree

4=Strongly Agree

I increased my understanding about the role of families in child success.

1

2

3

4

I learned about new family partnership activities that I can try in my home or community.

1

2

3

4

Part II - Please check up to three boxes.

My favorite part(s) of the Institute were:

☐ Welcome and Introductions

☐ Erika Aguirre Presentation

☐ Karen Mapp Presentation

☐ Family Engagement and Leadership Workshops

☐ Working Lunch

☐ Carmen Vega-Martinez Presentation

☐ Jerry Tello Presentation

☐ Closing

Part III – Please write your responses below.

Please tell us two things that you learned today:

1. _____

2. _____

Please list two activities that you will take to support children at home or in your community:

1. _____

2. _____

