# PARENT LEADERSHIP NETWORK FACILITATOR GUIDE

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A PRODUCT OF: Alabama Partnership for Children - Montgomery, Alabama CONTRIBUTING DEVELOPERS: Tish MacInnis, Alabama Strengthening Families Coordinator Julie Odom, Special Projects Coordinator Felicia Wilburn, Early Childhood Resource Coordinator - 2017



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# Introduction to the Alabama Parent Leadership Network

### Set Up:

- Arrange room and projector
- Place sign in sheet in a prominent place for people to sign when coming in

### Materials to prepare in advance:

- Pre-written on separate sheets of flip chart paper- Parking Lot, Expectations, Parent Resilience, Social Connections, Concrete Support, Knowledge of Parenting and Child Development, Social and Emotional Competence of Children
- Preprinted Match Game
- Markers
- Timer

### **Other supplies:**

- Sticky note pad and pen at each place
- Participant Workbook
- Copy of Protective Factors Survey and Parent Leadership Survey
- PAL brochure for each participant to take with them

#### Session lasts approximately 1 hour and 40 minutes

# Welcome and Housekeeping

Time: 15 min

- Welcome the group to training for the Alabama Parent Leadership Network.
- Introduce yourself.
- Tell the group about the time schedule, breaks and where the bathrooms are.
- Discuss setting some ground rules for your time together so that everyone feels heard and respected. Have the group come up with guidelines and write them down on the flipchart.

Briefly bring up the Ground Rules slide and discuss anything the group didn't mention.

• Explain the parking lot: When a question or comment comes up that we want to discuss, but it falls outside of the current topic, or requires a little research to answer, we will write that question or idea on the board in the "parking lot" for discussion at a later time, perhaps the end of the session or right after a break.



Be professional
Everyone participate

Parking lot
Turn cell phones on vibrate
HAVE FUN!!
Others?

· Realize we all learn from one anothe

# **Activity: Introduction Worksheet**

(Appendix pp 44; Workbook p 9) Time: 20 min

### **PURPOSE**

To provide participants with an opportunity to get to know one another, share their goals/feelings about Parent Leadership, and identify their expectations of this training.

\* Trainer can use this exercise or another get-acquainted exercise.

### ACTIVITY

- Have participants break into groups of two.
- Use handout **"Introduction Worksheet"** as a guide for their discussion.
- Tell participants they will be given 10 minutes, 5 minutes per person to discuss the information from the introduction worksheet.

After 10 minutes the large group will reconvene and each member will introduce their partner to the group addressing the information on the introduction page.

# **Program Description: Organizations and Partnerships**

#### Time: 5 min

FRIENDS is an acronym for Family Resource Information, Education, and Network Development Service. FRIENDS National Center for Community-Based Child Abuse Prevention (CBCAP) is a service of the United States Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families, Children's Bureau. We are a federally mandated Training and Technical Assistance Provider for CBCAP lead agencies.

FRIENDS is committed to providing training and technical assistance to CBCAP State Lead Agencies and their funded programs that help with their:

- Understanding of the value, benefits, challenges and behaviors associated with including parent leaders in family support and child abuse prevention program and policy development;
- Ability to build capacity within their respective states to engage parents as participants and leaders in the design, implementation and evaluation of program initiatives aimed at the prevention of child abuse and neglect;
- Influence on the inclusion of parent leaders in the Program Improvement Plans of the Child and Family Services Reviews (CFSRs) and the Child and Family Services Plan (CFSP) processes; and
- Competence to contribute to the creation of a useful tool kit on parent leadership development for statewide and community-based child abuse prevention programs.

Circle of Parents<sup>®</sup> is a national network of parent leaders and statewide and metropolitan regional non-profit organizations dedicated to using a peer-to-peer, self-help model of parent support as one of the means of preventing child abuse and neglect and strengthening families.

Circle of Parents<sup>®</sup> contributes the assets of its Parents as Leaders and Training and Technical Assistance Committees to the FRIENDS National Resource Center for CBCAP. Circle of Parents<sup>®</sup> collaborates with the FRIENDS Parent Advisory Council (PAC), develops and disseminates materials, publishes a quarterly newsletter, prepares and coordinates trainers, and provides technical assistance calls and on-site technical assistance visits. For all these activities, Circle of Parents<sup>®</sup> draws upon the expertise of the FRIENDS PAC, Parent Leadership Ambassador Training (PLAT) Trainers and its Training and Technical Assistance Committee.



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PLAT was created to assist in providing parents and providers with knowledge/skills/tools that strengthen parents in leadership roles and make partnership between parents and practitioners more successful.

The Alabama Partnership for Children adapted information and slides from the PLAT, as well as other resources, to be used in the Alabama Parent Leadership Network.

# Program Description: Common Language

Time: 10 min

# Introduction

When we talk about **parents**, we're referring to anyone in a parenting role – not just a biological parent. For our purposes, we are particularly interested in parents who have personal experience in using resources and services to strengthen their family. It is important to engage parents who speak and act from their perspective as a parent, as opposed to coming from the perspective of a staff member for an organization or institution.

We'll be using the word **practitioner** to describe a staff member, employed by an agency, WHO IS INVOLVED IN PROVIDING SERVICES FOR PARENTS, CHILDREN OR FAMILIES. Examples include principal, teacher, social worker, executive director, counselor, and family support worker.

Oftentimes, we may use the term professional to describe this role, but practitioner is more appropriate for a few reasons...

- First Many parents have professional roles in addition to parenting. It's a big oversight not to recognize that.
- In addition Parenting itself requires some professional expertise!
- Most importantly The word practitioner contains the word "practice" indicating that we don't have it all figured out.

Our work is a work in progress. I, myself, am getting some of that onthe-job practice right now! Please forgive me if I slip-up and use the word "professional."

Parent leadership is a term that we use interchangeably with

- Collaborative leadership
- Parent engagement
- Parent involvement
  - What do we mean when we talk about parent leadership? Parent leaders are people who:
    - Are committed to making positive changes in their family and community.
  - Are representing a "parent voice" as opposed to functioning in a staff role providing a different perspective.



- Starting at the same place
- Parent
- Practitioner
- Parent Leadership







#### **Practitioner:**

A staff member, employed by an agency, who is involved in providing services to children & families



ixamples Principal, teacher Social worker Executive director Counselor Family support worker



- Advocate for their children and for other parents – helping them see their strengths and encouraging them to make use of them and by doing these things, parent leaders become role models to their children and other parents.

Becoming a parent leader doesn't happen overnight. Everyone needs support, encouragement, and skills to take on leadership responsibilities. Sometimes, we just need others to help us notice and build on the skills we already have.

Essentially, you just need to look around this room to see what parent leadership looks like. We have parent leaders here who have a commitment to enriching their family and community; otherwise you wouldn't be here today.

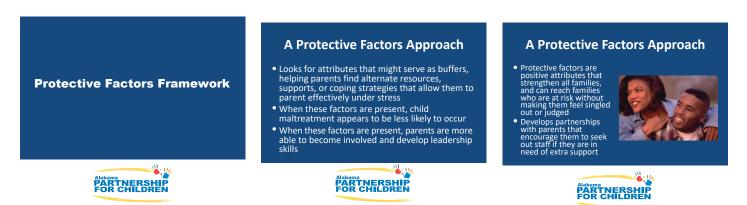


### BREAK

Time: 10 min

# **Program Description: The Protective Factors**

Time: 10 min



The Protective Factors serve as a framework for prevention that focuses not only on identifying protective factors but also on better understanding how protective factors may contribute to or explain positive outcomes for children, families, and communities. Within this training, you will see that the five protective factors are embedded throughout. This is to offer insights and contribute to the knowledge on how protective factors can encourage parent leadership and involvement.

There are 5 protective factors that we will be focusing on through the next 10 sessions. Each of these can nurture and contribute to growth of parent leadership.

- <u>Parent Resilience (be strong and flexible)</u>: Resilience is the ability to manage and bounce back from all types of challenges that emerge in every families' life.
- <u>Social Connections (parents need friends)</u>: Networks of support are essential to parents. These connection opportunities for people to "give back", are an important part of self-esteem and are a benefit for the community.
- <u>Concrete Support in Times of Need (we all need help sometimes)</u>: Meeting basic economic needs

like food, shelter, clothing and healthcare is essential for families to thrive.

- <u>Knowledge of Parenting and Child Development (being a great</u> <u>parent is part natural and part learned)</u>: Accurate information about child development and appropriate expectations for children's behavior at every age help parents see their children and youth in a positive light and promote their healthy development.
- <u>Social and Emotional Competence of Children (parents need</u> <u>to help their children communicate</u>): A child's ability to interact positively with others, self-regulate their behavior and effectively communicate their feelings has a positive impact on their relationships with their family, other adults, and peers.



# **Activity: Protective Factors - A Framework for Prevention**

(Appendix pp 45-46; not in Workbook) Time: 20 min

# PURPOSE

To link the Protective Factors to Parent Leadership and Involvement, and give participants an overview of each protective factor.

### ACTIVITY

The five protective factors are listed on sheets of paper and taped on walls around the training space. The group is given cards with a program strategy on each card. Choose strategies you think will be relevant to your group; and enough so each participant has 4 – 6 strategies. Then ask them to place each of the program strategies under the protective factor they think it would fit best. Once all the strategies have been placed on the sheets of paper process the activity. Review the sheets of paper with participants and select a few examples from each protective factor to ask why they thought that strategy went with a particular protective factor. Encourage discussion on how the strategies may fit into more than one protective factor.

# Closing

Time: 5 min

### **Lessons From Life**

A child that lives with ridicule learns to be timed. A child that lives with criticism learns to condemn. A child that lives with distrust learns to be deceiful. A child that lives with antagonism learns to be hostile. A child that lives with affection learns to love. A child that lives with encouragement learns confidence. A child that lives with rust learns justice. A child that lives with praise learns to appreciate. A child that lives with sharing learns to be appreciate. A child that lives with knowledge learns wisdom. A child that lives with knowledge learns to be tolerant.



ild that lives with happiness will find love and beauty

#### Sources

 Author Ronald Russell
 Parent Leadership Ambassador Training Guide, produced by Circle of PARENTS for the FRIENDS National Resource Center for Community Based Child Abuse Prevention. 7.12





Parenting Assistance Lini

THE UNIVERSITY OF ALABAMA

### GIVE

Provide parents with a Parent Assistance Line (PAL) brochure and explain that PAL is for anyone who wants information and support in becoming a more confident parent. PAL can provide helpful assistance to moms, dads, grandparents, and relatives whose children are age birth through adolescence.

# What Does Parent Leadership Look Like?

### Set Up:

- Arrange room for ease of conversation and sight and sound of the presentation
- Ensure laptop, speakers and projector are all connected and working (if available)
- Place sign-in sheet in a prominent place for people to sign when coming in

### Materials to prepare in advance:

- Separate sheets of flip chart paper with headings: "Agree" and "Disagree"
- Grab Bag with various small items (ex: paperclip, rubber ball, hand mirror, small toy, etc.)

### **Other supplies:**

- Timer
- Blank flip chart paper
- Participant Workbook

Session lasts approximately 1 hour and 45 minutes

# Activity: Leadership - Where Do You Stand?

(Appendix pp 47; Workbook p 13)

Time: 10 min

### **PURPOSE**

To have participants think about and discuss their views on leadership and whether leaders are born or made.

### **ACTIVITY**

Prior to the training, post two signs, one on each side of the room. One that says AGREE, one that says DISAGREE.

Have participants stand up and go to the part of the training room that has room to move around.

Explain to the group that you are going to make a few statements. If the participants agree with the statement you make, they will move to the agree side of the room or line. Likewise, for disagree.



Read the following statements. Encourage discussion about why they chose their answer.

- Leaders are born, not made.
- Anybody can be a leader if they try hard enough.
- With the right training and studying, almost anyone can become a leader.

# What is Parent Leadership?

Time: 5 min

Parent leadership is when parents have involvement and influence over what happens with services for their children and the community.

(Click on sound icon to play testimony)



(Appendix pp 48-52, Workbook p 14) Time: 15 min

### **PURPOSE**

To discuss examples of leadership and ways that agencies encourage leadership in all parents.

# ACTIVITY

Divide participants into smaller group for discussion. Propose each of the following questions, giving groups 5 minutes for discussion of each question in their group.

- What does parent leadership feel like for parents?
- What does parent leadership feel like for agencies?

After the group has discussed each question, bring the larger group back together and ask groups to share their thoughts on the questions. Make notes on large flip chart paper. Use the points that are brought by each group as you begin to discuss the parent leadership ladder. Point out the parent leadership ladder in the participant workbook on **page 14**. Examples are on appendix **pages 48-52**. Discuss how each level of the ladder engages all parents, even those who are just beginning in leadership roles.



	Beginning the Adventure
1	Creating Avenues for Parent Involvement and Participation
1	Parent Leadership Activities Leading to the Road of Success
1	Laying the Foundation for the Road to Success
1	Maintaining Organizational Parent Leadership Policies – The Map to Success



# **Activity: Why Do We Need Parent Involvement?**

(Appendix pp 53; Workbook p 19) Time: 10 min

### PURPOSE

To provide participants the opportunity to discuss benefits of parent involvement for the parent, child, agency and community.

### ACTIVITY

- Parents may turn in their workbooks to the page "Why Do We Need Parent Involvement?" page 19
- Ask participants to jot down quickly 2 4 benefits that occur for parents when they are involved with agencies.
- Ask participants to jot down quickly 2 4 benefits that occur for organizations when they are involved with parents.

### DISCUSS

Ask participants to share their answers and discuss, giving attention to the points below:

- Parents who are involved in services that are provided to their children have stronger families and better organizations. An example of this: children are more successful in school regarding their behavior and their grades.
- Children and family advocates felt so strongly about this, they supported a federal law to make states include parents when possible.
- Children learn best when their parents are able to play four key roles in their children's learning: teachers (helping their children at home); supporters (contributing to their skills at school); advocates (helping children receive fair treatment); and decision makers (participating in joint problem-solving at every level).
- Because of research and information about stronger families and better agencies, legislators passed a law to provide money to states that include parents.

# What Does Parent Leadership Look Like?

# **Activity: True Leader Colors**

(Appendix pp 54-55; Workbook pp 20-21) Time: 20 minutes

### **PURPOSE**

To have fun and get an idea of our strengths and challenges as leaders.

### ACTIVITY

Have all participants take out the True Leader Colors activity sheets (2 pages). Using the first sheet (table), have participants read each box and circle one word in each box that best describes them. After participants have completed this ask them to look horizontally (left to right) across the three columns and add up the number of words circled in each line (A, B, C, D). Record the total in the box to the right of the line. Add up the numbers recorded in each lettered column above and record those numbers in the box at the bottom of the page.

To draw conclusions about each participant's leadership style, participant's dominant color will be their highest total, and their supporting color will be the next highest total. Once everyone has discovered their dominant and secondary colors have participants take turns reading each of the descriptions out loud on the second page.

# **Protective Factor #1: Parental Resilience**

### **INFORM**

Parental Resilience is the ability to cope and bounce back from challenges. It's a complex thing, and all the skills build on each other. It's kind of like when we talk about sharing. We want children to learn to share, but we know there are lots of skills that have to come together for a child to really be able to share.

Certain skills and attitudes are building blocks for resiliency. These are things that we can try to help each other build as we go through hard times. The ability to survive challenges can lead to greater leadership skills.

# Activity: Grab Bag

Time: 15 min

### PURPOSE

To help participants become familiar with the protective factor Parental Resilience and how we are resilient in our lives.

# ACTIVITY

Bring a grab bag of various small items, one for each group member (these might include a keychain, golf ball, buttons, rubber band, paper clip, matches, battery, block of wood, candle, etc.). These can be random things, any small item will work. Have each group member reach in the bag without looking and select an item. Allow a few minutes for the group to think about the qualities or characteristics of the item they have selected. Each person will be asked to describe the qualities of the item they selected that they believe reflects their own characteristics.

Model this activity by drawing from the bag and describing your own characteristics or by using the following example, "I selected a rubber band. A rubber band is flexible and is used to hold things together. I have learned to be flexible when making decisions and in relating to others."



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#### **Parental Resilience**

- The first layer is traits and skills that lay the groundwork for resiliency. Communication skills, strategies to cope with crisis, belief systems and hope are all things that parents need to become stronger.
- The next layer shows some of the steps that people need to take when they face difficulties, so that they will be able to get through it and move on. Parents can recognize the challenges they face, acknowledge how they feel about these challenges in themselves and in others, and problem solve based on the skills that they have learned.



#### **Parental Resilience**

 The top two rows show steps that people take to get through a stressful situation, and, hopefully, come out stronger than they were to start with. Once parents have learned the things in the bottom two layers, they can gather resources, make good choices, and take action.



# What Does Parent Leadership Look Like?

# **Activity: My Journey**

(Appendix p 56; Workbook pp 22-23) Time: 15 min

### **PURPOSE**

To provide participants the opportunity to reflect on their time involved with parent leadership up to this point and how being resilient has influenced their experience.

### ACTIVITY

Take a quick moment to think about which of these titles best describes your current experiences working with parent leadership – or better yet – your journey.

Quickly identify what you would choose as a description for your journey so far and make some notes about why you chose this road. You can answer the questions on the other side of the page if you have time. (3 minutes)

Ask participants to share the title they've chosen with the group, along with some reasons for choosing it.

### **Possible Follow-up Questions**

- What kinds of things have happened during your parent engagement activities that stand out to you?
- What is exciting?
- What is frustrating or angering?
- Are there experiences in your past, with a parent/practitioner that get in the way of your success today? What happened?
- Do others on the team seem to harbor bad feelings due to past experiences?

#### **Session 3 Sources**

 Parent Leadership Ambassador Training Guide, produced by Circle of PARENTS for the FRIENDS National Resource Center for Community Based Child Abuse Prevention. 7.12



Closing

Time: 5 min



# **Benefits of Parent Involvement**

### Set Up:

- Arrange room for ease of conversation and sight and sound of the presentation
- Ensure laptop, speakers and projector are all connected and working (if available)
- Place sign-in sheet in a prominent place for people to sign when coming in

### Materials to prepare in advance:

- Prepared poster boards for Family Feud Game with answers covered; OR, if you have access to a laptop, you can download the game template at either https://www.rusnakcreative.com/familyfeud or https://www.youthdownloads.com/games/family-fued-powerpoint; YOU WILL NEED TO SET UP THE TEMPLATES IN ADVANCE, WHICH COULD TAKE UP TO AN HOUR
- Family Feud Category Handouts (Appendix pp 60-62)

### **Other Supplies:**

- Timer
- Participant Workbook
- Sticky notes
- Pens and blank paper

Session lasts approximately 1 hour and 40 minutes

# **Activity: Benefits of Parent Involvement**

(Appendix p 57; Workbook p 27) Time: 20 min

### PURPOSE

To review why parent involvement is important.

### ACTIVITY

Divide participants into 2 small groups and ask them to brainstorm the benefits of parent involvement—for the parents and then for the organization. They can use the workbook page titled Benefits of Parent Involvement. Ask one member of the group to document the group's ideas and report them back to the large group.

After each group has reported back, de-brief by going over the key points that there are definite benefits for families and organizations. Research supports parent involvement as a way to create stronger families and more effective organizations.

Benefits for parents/organizations include the following:

- Improved services for the family...who better knows what is needed than the parents and families.
- Parents feel better because they are making a difference.
- Organizations are more accountable.
- Parents can learn knowledge and skills to help with future challenges.
- Children see their parents making a change and it builds confidence that change can happen.



# **Benefits of Parent Involvement**

# **Activity: How Do You See Me?**

(Appendix pp 58-59; Workbook p 28-29) Time: 20 min

### **PURPOSE**

To provide participants with the opportunity to identify the stereotypes and preconceived ideas that we carry of each other and ourselves.

### ACTIVITY

Divide the participants into two new groups to complete this exercise. Ask the first group to be "practitioners" and brainstorm the myths,

biases and assumptions made about "parents" on a flip chart. Ask the second group to be "parents" and brainstorm the myths, biases and assumptions made about "practitioners" on a separate flip chart. They can use the workbook page titled "How do you see me?"

\*Remind participants of the "Guidelines for Brainstorming"

- No judging
- All ideas are valid
- There is no such thing as a "dumb" idea
- You do not have to agree with someone's point of view, but listen and respect that they bring a different perspective than you

Have a representative from each group report back to the entire group. Now split the group into two "mixed" groups of both parents and practitioners. From the list, have them identify what should be packed for the journey and what should be left behind.

Ask the entire group to reflect on the following questions:

- What does this exercise tell us about the challenges of implementing parent engagement?
- What do the comments reveal about stereotypes and/or assumptions that are sometimes held between parents and practitioners what practical steps could you take to begin to breakdown these stereotypes and assumptions?
- If an organization creates a supportive, strength-based environment, how might these assumptions change?

Talk about how important it is be authentic in parent leadership, much like the participants were authentic during the, "How Do You See Me?" exercise. Authentic partnership includes upholding commitments made to parents, ensuring the practitioners' and programs' credibility.

Ask the participants to brainstorm ways to set the stage for parent leadership and <u>convince their</u> <u>organizations to engage parents</u>. Distribute a list of strategies and practical tools to convince the decisionmakers to make a commitment to engaging parents in the work of the organization.

Share success stories of organizations building coalitions and collaborating to include parents.

### **BREAK**

Time: 10 min

Detours and Road Construction Pre-onceived ideas Fers Challenges Barge<sup>age</sup>

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# **Benefits of Parent Involvement**

# **Activity: FAMILY FEUD!**

(Appendix pp 60-62; not in Workbook) TIME: 45 min

## PURPOSE

To identify and review fears, barriers and obstacles for parents and organizations.

# ACTIVITY

Divide the participants into two "families" for a game of Family Feud. Using the music and game show format, ask participants to identify:

- Common fears and obstacles to parent leadership
- Benefits of parent leadership
- Roles of parents
- Roles of practitioners

After the game, review the handouts Fears, Common Barriers, Challenges, and Roles (in Appendix) that match each Family Feud category in more depth <u>if necessary</u>.

# **ALTERNATE ACTIVITY**

If you are unable to play Family Feud, discussion/learning can be facilitated through the forced choices game:

- Have participants stand up and go to a somewhat open space.
- Put a sign on one side of the room that says Parent Fears.
- Put a sign on the other side of the room that says Agency Fears.
- As you read each fear, have them move to the sign for the group they believe would have that fear.
- Please note: there are some fears that are both parent and agency. This would be an opportunity to discuss with participants some of the commonalities shared by both groups.





- Family Focused Organizing: Self, Family & Team/Team Building; *Community Organizing and Family Issues*, 2004.
- Parent Leadership Ambassador Training Guide, produced by Circle of PARENTS for the FRIENDS National Resource Center for Community Based Child Abuse Prevention, 7.12



Closing

Time: 5 min

# **Building Social Connections**

### Set Up:

- Arrange room for ease of conversation and sight and sound of the presentation
- Ensure laptop, speakers and projector are all connected and working (if available)
- Place sign-in sheet in a prominent place for people to sign when coming in

### Materials to prepare in advance:

- 16 Pre-inflated balloons
- Scenarios (16) for balloon activity cut into separate strips (Appendix pp 63-64)
- Family Scenarios (2) separated (Appendix p 64)

### **Other supplies:**

- Timer
- Large ball of yarn
- Scissors
- Ball, doll, or stuffed animal to represent the "baby"
- Participant Workbook

#### Session lasts approximately 1 hour and 50 minutes

# **Protective Factor #2: Social Connections**

Time: 5 min

### **INFORM**

Social isolation is strongly connected to child maltreatment. More young families than ever before are living far away from their extended families and need to develop their own social support networks with friends, co-workers, neighbors, and other parents with children of similar ages. For preventing child abuse and neglect, and strengthening parent involvement, it's not just having social connections, but the quality of the connections:

- Having someone to talk to and vent frustration, especially about parenting challenges
- Connections that help families to access resources e.g. a friend that will provide babysitting
- Opportunities to see other parents parenting this allows parents to pick up some good techniques and perhaps also recognize some strategies that don't work
- Social networks that include positive norms about parenting conversations with other parents about the joys of raising children and sharing tips for positive things to do with children



# **Activity: Social Connections**

Time: 10 min

### **PURPOSE**

To assist participants in becoming familiar with the Protective Factor Social Connections, and understand how this protective factor contributes to parent leadership.

# ACTIVITY

Ask participants to stand forming a large circle. Give one group member a large ball of yarn, and ask them to hold the end of the string and toss the ball to someone else in the circle. Optional: Before tossing the yarn to someone else, the participant can name a person or organization that has been of support to them. The group continues to toss the yarn, symbolizing the connections that families have in their community. After everyone has had the ball of yarn, the facilitator places the "baby" in the center of the web to symbolize how the network supports the child. Next, the facilitator uses a pair of scissors and cuts the yarn in several places. Ask the group what would happen if a family's social connections were cut like this. How would this impact their ability to parent as well as become a parent leader?

### Video: Moms in the Park (should play automatically) Time: 5 min

### **PURPOSE**

This is a fun video to demonstrate the need for social connections

### Activity: Share your story

Time: 30 min

### **PURPOSE**

This is an opportunity for the Parent Leader to tell their story about making connections and let participants know they will be invited to share their stories. As you tell your story identify, from all strengths and deficits that we've discussed so far, what we take/or keep in mind on our journey and what must we leave behind. You may want to prepare and practice your story before the session.

### ACTIVITY

Ask for volunteers, or go around the room and let parents share their stories.

### **INFORM**

Let's review the things we need to remember from our earlier discussions. We should be aware that we all have fears, both sides, in making changes; there are barriers that we don't want to take with us, but they are hard to move, so we must use creativity and thinking outside the box to overcome the barriers. Most everyone involved has a desire to make the partnership work, but again, so much can get in the way. If we all pack a commitment to the process, then in the end, we can achieve success.













PARTNERSHIP FOR CHILDREN

BREAK

Time: 10 min

# **Protective Factor #3: Concrete Support in Times of Need**

# **Activity: Balloon Burdens**

(Appendix pp 63-64; not in Workbook) Time: 30 min

Ask for one volunteer to play the parent role for this activity. This person sits in a chair in the front of the room. The other participants are each given 2 – 4 numbered scenarios and access to a stash of 16 balloons. The scenarios can be found in the appendix. Before the training, reproduce and cut each scenario on a separate strip of paper. Inform the group that they are going to experience, "A day in the life of a parent leader." Have the participants read the scenarios, in numbered order, out loud so the rest of the group can hear. As the scenarios are read, the person takes a balloon up to the parent in the chair, and hands it to them.



After all scenarios are read and the parent has been handed all the balloons, debrief using the following questions:

- To the parent: How do they feel? Overwhelmed? Tired? Just another day?
- To the participants: How did it feel to be handing over all those burdens to the parent? Be sure to point out anything that you heard participants say during the exercise that may have shown how the participants felt about it, or that they were trying to be helpful.
- What were the strengths that this parent brought to the table (excellent balance of balloons, creativity in managing all the burdens, etc.)?
- How does this represent real life for parent leaders? For practitioners?
- What could have been done differently in the scenarios that would have encouraged the parent leader to stay involved? What about ways the organization could have collaborated to make the parent's life easier? How might we have nurtured this parent leader's skills in a better, more appropriate way?

What could have been done differently in the scenarios that would have encouraged the parent leader to stay involved? What about ways the organization could have collaborated to make the parent's life easier? How might we have nurtured this parent leader's skills in a better, more appropriate way?

# **Activity: Concrete Support in Times of Need**

(Appendix pp 64; not in Workbook) Time: 15 min

### PURPOSE

To assist participants in becoming familiar with the Protective Factor Concrete Support in Times of Need, and understanding that parent leadership will grow when parents have access to the support they need.

### **INFORM**

The balloon activity reminds us to consider needs that others may have and ways we can address those needs. Providing concrete support in times of need is an important way of intervening before a crisis happens. When a family is unable to meet their basic needs, they cannot focus on less-immediate concerns like positive discipline and helping their child's development, or on building their skills as leaders. We can help respond to a crisis: linking them with food, shelter, and clothing. They may need assistance with health care, education, job opportunities, mental health issues, domestic violence, and substance abuse. Often we can also link them with services for children – for example, assessment and services for social-emotional development problems.

Assisting parents to identify, find, and receive concrete support in times of need helps to ensure they and their family have the basic necessities everyone deserves in order to grow, as well as specialized medical, mental health, social, educational or legal services.

### ACTIVITY

Have a participant or participants read the slide. Then break into 2 small groups. Distribute one of the pre-printed family scenarios for concrete support in times of need to each group. Participants in each group decide how they would increase concrete support for their family. Groups brainstorm what strategies could be used by the program to increase concrete support in the families they serve. Focus the discussion on how this might impact a parent's ability to step into a leadership role.

### Closing

Time: 5 min



#### **Concrete Support in Times of Need**

- Times of need don't only occur for families in poverty
  All families have times of need; whether it's the birth of a new child, health problems, etc.
- You can be a resource for families by helping them access the services they need and letting them has
- access the services they need and letting them know that you can be a source for that information



#### Sources

- Family Focused Organizing: Self, Family & Team/Team Building; *Community Organizing and Family Issues*, 2004.
- Parent Leadership Ambassador Training Guide, produced by Circle of PARENTS for the FRIENDS National Resource Center for Community Based Child Abuse Prevention, 7.12



# Knowledge of Parenting and Child Development And Social and Emotional Competence of Children

#### Set Up:

- Arrange room for ease of conversation and sight and sound of the presentation
- Ensure laptop, speakers and projector are all connected and working (if available)
- Place sign-in sheet in a prominent place for people to sign when coming in

#### Materials to prepare in advance:

- Separate sheets of flip chart paper with headings: "Healthy Diet"; "Physical Activity and Adequate Sleep"; "Stimulating Environment"; "Emotionally and Physically Safe"; "Use and Hear Language"
- Scenarios (without the skill name) cut out into separate strips of paper (Appendix p 69)

### Materials for participants:

- Timer
- Markers
- Colored sticker dots
- Participant Workbook
- "YOU already have what it takes" cards (see order form)

#### Session lasts approximately 1 hour and 45 minutes



# Protective Factor #4: Knowledge of Parenting and Child Development

Note to facilitator: Since participants in this project were recruited from among people who have already had some parenting training experience, this section is meant to be a brief review and not an in depth training.

# **Activity: Healthy Brain Development**

Time: 15 min

### PURPOSE

To set the stage for activities from the perspective of the developing brain.

### **INFORM**

These are the four main lobes of the brain and what functions they are responsible for. You can truly make a difference in helping your child's brain develop. The key factors in healthy brain development are:

- Providing a healthy diet
- Making sure children have plenty of physical activity and adequate sleep
- Creating a stimulating environment where children can explore their world and build their skills
- Making certain your child is emotionally and physically safe
- Creating lots of opportunities for children to hear and use language

### ACTIVITY

- Ask participants to go to the flip chart paper and write 2 3 things they know about each heading
- After 5 10 minutes, have everyone take their seats and read the items on the papers
- If necessary, add facts that were missed
- Commend the group on how much they know about healthy habits that lead to healthy brain development!

# **Activity: Child Growth and Development**

Time: 15 min

### PURPOSE

To review appropriate thinking about children's growth and development.

### INFORM

Have a parent read each bullet point on the Developmental Milestones slide. Discuss and answer questions, if necessary.

### ACTIVITY

Using the four flip chart pages with the headings, "potty-trained," "sleeping through the night," "helping the family out by cleaning up around the house," and "walking", distribute colored sticker "dots" and ask each participant to place their dot on the line where they believe the "typical" child gains these skills. Debrief by discussing the wide range of typical development, and discuss how parent's expectations might have an impact on the child's development and the parent's feelings about the child.



#### **Developmental Milestones**

- Developmental milestones are behaviors or physical skills seen in infants and children as they grow and develop.
- Each milestone has a normal range in which a child may reach it. It is helpful to know what your child should be learning to do and what he or she can't quite do yet.



#### **Developmental Milestones**

- Parents take children to the health care provider for well-child visits in the early years to follow their child's development.
- Identifying children with delayed milestones early is important because research has shown that the sooner the developmental services are started, the better the outcome. Examples of developmental services include: speech therapy, physical therapy and developmental preschool.



# Protective Factor #5: Social and Emotional Competence of Children

# **Activity: Critical Needs of Children**

(Appendix pp 65-68; Workbook pp 40-43) Time: 20 min

### **PURPOSE**

To review the five critical needs of children for good social and emotional health.

#### **INFORM**

Let participants know you are going to move from discussing their child's physical and cognitive health and development, to their child's social and emotional health. To help us gain a little perspective we are going to think about our own childhood for a few minutes.

#### ACTIVITY

Ask them to turn to **page 40** in their workbooks and write down one or two things their parents did that made them happy, and something they wish they had done that they didn't do.

(Allow 7 or 8 minutes.)

Ask participants to keep these situations in mind as you discuss the next slide.

Ask the parents to turn to **page 41** in their workbooks. Read the opening paragraph, then ask for volunteers to read each critical needs' definition and examples.

Ask if anyone wants to share any of the situations they wrote about their childhood as they relate to the five critical needs.

After everyone has had the chance to share explain that, whether we believe we had good or bad parents, we all can learn from our experiences as children and think about the parent we want to be for our children. We can model the things they did that were positive and learn from and change things that were not.

# Activity: Scenarios for Helping Children Develop Social Interaction Skills

(Appendix p 69; not in Workbook) Time: 5 min

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#### PURPOSE

To review ways to help children develop social interaction skills.

#### **INFORM**

Now we focus on skills children need as they interact with others.

Social-Emotional Skills

Alabama PARTNERSHIP FOR CHILDREN





#### **Five Critical Needs**

- Respected
  Accepted
  Important
- Included

• Secure

### ACTIVITY

With the "Social-Emotional Skills" slide up, hand the pre-cut scenarios, from **Appendix p 69**, to individual parents. Let them take turns reading the scenarios and choosing which social-emotional skill the scenario is modeling.

### BREAK

Time: 10 min

# Your Child's Social-Emotional Health

Time: 30 min

### INFORM

Self Reflection is a way to help children learn the key things that will make them emotionally and socially intelligent. It is a way of providing structure to develop valuable social and life skills.

Self Reflection is an approach that is kind AND firm. If we are just kind to our children, they don't learn anything and may even run all over us. If we are just firm, they will not feel loved, accepted, included, respected, or secure.

The tools work long-term. If we yell and punish our children, it definitely works – but only in the short-term. The tools you'll see here work and their impact is long-term.

Through the use of the tools and methods, your children will develop their own capability and need less support from year to year to do the right thing.

The tools teach children valuable social and life skills, and they always give children a sense of belonging and significance.

### DISCUSSION

Ask parents to think of a time when they responded to misbehavior with one of these three Rs as a child or when their child responded with one of the three Rs. Ask for volunteers to share their experiences. Follow up with these questions as applicable:

- 1. Did the child feel respected?
- 2. Did they feel a sense of belonging and significance?
- 3. Was the punishment effective long-term?
- 4. Did the child learn any valuable social and life skill?
- 5. Did the child discover their own capability and how to use their power constructively?

# **Homework: Self Reflection**

(Appendix p 70; Workbook p 44)

### GIVE

Pass out the "You already have what it takes" cards in their envelopes. Allow the participants to open them. Enjoy, comment on, and make note of their reactions. If at all possible, record it on your cell phone and send us the video!





Ask parents to turn in their workbooks to **page 44**. Tell them that, for homework, they are going to reflect on and write down things they already do to support their children and what impact it has made in their children's lives.

### Closing

Time: 5 min



Sources

• Smart & Secure Children (SSC) Parent

Medicine, Atlanta, GA; 2013.

Leadership Program, The Satcher Health Leadership Institute at Morehouse School of

# **Nurturing Parent Leadership**

### Set Up:

- Arrange room for ease of conversation and sight and sound of the presentation
- Ensure laptop, speakers and projector are all connected and working (if available)
- Place sign-in sheet in a prominent place for people to sign when coming in

# **Supplies:**

- Timer
- Markers
- Two small objects for tossing (ex: a stress ball, or a small stuffed animal)
- Blank flip chart paper
- Participant Workbook

### Session lasts approximately 2 hours

# **Activity: Sharing Self-Reflection Homework**

(Appendix p 70; Workbook p 44) Time: 20 min

### **INFORM**

During the last session we discussed how you as an individual can impact the healthy development of your children's brains. Your homework assignment was to discuss how you are already doing that.

### **SHARE**

Encourage all parents to share their worksheet. When everyone has had a chance to participate, remind them that they are already all doing so much for their children! Let them know that they also can't forget about nurturing themselves.



# **Activity: Stress Busters**

Time: 10 min

### **INFORM**

We have to take care of ourselves if we want to be able to take care of others. We all have things that stress us, but we also have things that make us feel relaxed and happy.

### ACTIVITY

Ask the parents to form a circle if they are not already in one. Introduce the two small objects by which one represents stress and which one represents good feelings. Tell the parents they are going to toss the

stress object around to each other and whoever catches it must tell something that causes them stress. Then, after a few seconds you will toss the good feelings object into the circle, so that both objects are being tossed at the same time, to different people. Whoever catches the second object must tell something that gives them good feelings.

Start the first object by tossing it to a random person. After it has gone to everyone at least once, toss the second object to someone who is not holding the first object. If tossing the ball gets confusing and everyone starts laughing, that is fine. Simply state that laughter is a great stress buster! When the responses start to diminish, stop the game and send everyone back to their seat.

# **Activity: Taking Care of Yourself**

(Appendix p 71; Workbook p 49) Time: 10 min

### INFORM

We just spent some time reminding ourselves of what we have accomplished as parents and how much we do. We also took time to think about and share what makes us happy and saw how that can counteract the things that stress us. Here are some other ideas for relaxation and rejuvenation:

- Make a list of the things that make you happy and put it somewhere you can see it as a reminder every day. It can help when things don't feel good at the moment.
- Focused breathing is a powerful way to get rid of stress and calm ourselves.
- Creating a feel good place can be very reenergizing. That place can be a real place in our homes. We don't need a lot of room. It can be a memory box, a certain chair, a place where we have a photo, a list, some objects. It can even be in our heads. That is a place we can go anytime!
- Fresh air and some good deep breathing do wonders even if we just step outside for a few minutes and really breathe in.
- Physical activity, stretching, walking, dancing gets rid of stress hormones in our bodies. That keeps us healthy and fit.

### ACTIVITY

Ask parents to turn to **page 49** in their workbooks. Give them about 5 minutes to write down ideas.



#### **Ways to Nurture Yourself**

- Remind yourself of what is good
- Breathe
- Create a feel good place
- Fresh Air
- Physical activity
- Relaxation techniques



# **Activity: Family Visioning**

(Appendix p 72; Workbook p 50)

Time: 30 min

### **INFORM**

Now that we have ideas about how to nurture ourselves and our children, we move on to nurturing our family visions and goals. As a parent you are a leader of your family. You probably have some hopes and dreams for yourself and your children.

Family Goal Setting
PARTNERSHIP FOR CHILDREN

### ACTIVITY

Ask participants to turn to **page 50** in their workbooks. Slowly talk them through the visioning process with the following questions:

Think about 10 years from now. How old will your children be? Will some have grown up and moved away? Where would you like your family to be? Imagine you are feeling happy, fulfilled and accomplished as a parent and a family member. Imagine your children, spouse and/or other family members are similarly happy, fulfilled and accomplished. What does that look like for you? What are the components of that picture? How does it feel? Now, take 5 minutes to write some words or draw a picture in the first section of the handout to describe it.

After about 5 minutes, ask a few parents to briefly share their visions. Ask what their vision shows about what they really value in their family.

Continue the process slowly: Using your family vision and values as a guide, think about 3 years from now. What goals would you like to achieve by then that can take you toward your 10-year family vision and honor what you value? What can realistically be achieved in 3 years? Take a few minutes to think about it and then jot it down on your handout.

Give about 5 minutes.

Continue the process: Now we are going to get even more concrete. Looking at your 3-year goals, what are some things that you would like to see for your family in the next 3 months that could move you toward those goals? Take 5 minutes to jot down some ideas for 3-month goals for your family.

After about 5 minutes, divide a flip chart page into 2 columns. In one column write the heading "Family Goals". Ask each parent to share one of his or her short-term goals and write them in the column.

Tell the group you will finish the exercise after a brief 10 minute break.

### BREAK

Time: 10 min

# **Activity: From Goals to Action Steps**

Time: 15 min

Write the heading "Obstacles" in the second column on the flip chart page. Ask participants to look at the list of family goals and determine what is an obstacle for each of these goals that might stand in the way of achieving them?

After writing the obstacles on the flip chart, go back through and have the group brainstorm how to turn each obstacle into a goal and identify one action they can take toward that goal.

Ask for volunteers to describe how it felt to set family goals and plan to meet obstacles. Was it scary or empowering? Did it feel realistic, like the goals could be accomplished? Encourage the group take one of the small action steps toward their goal when they go home and observe the effects.

# Activity: Team Goal Setting

Time: 30 min

#### **INFORM**

Now that we have set goals for our family, it is not a big stretch to talk about possible goals that this group could work on together, and explore what it would mean to decide to work together as a team to accomplish these goals.



#### ACTIVITY

Write the words GROUP/TEAM GOALS on a new sheet of flip chart paper. Ask participants to begin by looking at the list of family goals they made. Ask if they can see any common or overlapping goals or problems that families within this group are facing? Ask if they think other parents or families outside this group are facing the same problems?

Write some of the ideas on the group goals list. Help the parents to see that goals they might think they need to solve individually, in some cases, could become collective efforts. In the Building Social Connections session we shared some of our parent leadership stories and what we were able to accomplish with others. Consider the goals we heard in the stories. Look at the list of group goals and think of new ideas. What would you like to see this group start on in the next weeks and months?

Give them about 5 minutes to discuss this in pairs. Then ask for each pair to share their thoughts. Put an asterisk by ideas that are already on the list and add ideas that aren't.

Tell the parents that in the remaining sessions of this training they will learn tools to use in working in their community and have more chances to think of a short-term goal. It can be a project or an activity. They can do it with this group only, or choose to work with the other APLN groups in this area. So, keep this list in mind.

### Closing

Time: 5 min

#### Sources

- Smart & Secure Children (SSC) Parent Leadership Program, The Satcher Health Leadership Institute at Morehouse School of Medicine, Atlanta, GA; 2013.
- Family Focused Organizing: Self, Family & Team/Team Building; Community Organizing and Family Issues, 2004.



# **Action Planning**

### Set Up:

- Arrange room for ease of conversation and sight and sound of the presentation
- Ensure laptop, speakers and projector are all connected and working (if available)
- Place sign-in sheet in a prominent place for people to sign when coming in

### Materials to prepare in advance:

• In advance write- "Strengths"; "Weaknesses"; "Benefits"; "Dangers" on separate sheets of flip chart paper or on one sheet with 4 quadrants.

# Materials for participants:

- Timer
- Participant Workbook

#### Session lasts approximately 1 hour and 50 minutes

### **INFORM**

In the Nurturing Parent Leadership session you envisioned your family's future 10 years from now and worked backward to get to our action steps today. All action plans start with the end in mind. Today we will discuss the action planning process in more detail.

# **Activity: Envisioning Group Goals**

Time: 30 min

### **PURPOSE**

To continue to develop ideas for a group project.

### ACTIVITY

Re-post the Group/Team Goals page from the Nurturing Parent Leadership session and give everyone a blank sheet of paper. Remind participants that the flip chart contains some of the ideas they had about what the group might begin to work on. Tell them you will brainstorm a little further. Have the group discuss the goals and choose one everyone can agree to work on. Ask participants to imagine that a year from now they had a stronger parent leadership program and more parent leaders working toward that goal. Discuss the following questions:

- What are people saying about your group?
- What are you doing every day, week, or month to keep the group moving toward its goal?
- What do you think have been the key ingredients in making the group successful?
- What have been the obstacles along the way?

# **Current Reality**

Time: 20 min



**Parent Leadership Network** 

**Action Planning** 

PARTNERSHIP FOR CHILDREN

Tell participants that you will now look at your current reality. Current reality provides an opportunity to discuss what you have, both positive and negative, to take on your trip. It's the "What shall I pack?" of action planning. There are 4 major parts to anyone's current reality. You will look at each in turn and make a list. On a new flipchart sheet, write "strengths", read the description, and write down what the parents tell you are their strengths. Repeat with the next 3 items.

**Strengths** – Think about the strengths you have to get you to your destination. This needs to include the tangible and intangible items. Examples of this might include: funding; team excitement, motivation, and positive attitude; new members that want to make things change; an organization culture that embraces parent involvement. Anything you can think of that would be strength, should be listed here.

**Weaknesses** – What are the things that might get in the way? What could get in your way of accomplishing your goal? Again, include the tangible and intangible. Examples of this might include: disagreements on the team that cannot be resolved; not enough visibility in the community-parents don't even know you exist; low energy members - people who are tired and stretched too thin.

**Benefits** – This is different than strengths. This would be, if you arrived at your destination, what would be the benefits? Include tangible and intangible. Examples of this might include: a stronger network of parents to help out in school; mentors for other parents, better relationship with organizations.

**Dangers** – This is different than weaknesses. This would be, if you arrived at your destination, what might be the dangers? This sounds sort of funny in a way, how could doing something positive, making the community better, have any dangers? Examples of this might include: people feeling threatened by change; or changes creating so much more work that it can't be accomplished well.

After all four lists are made, look at them for a moment. What does your current reality say about your destination? Does it still look doable? Scary? Worth it? Does any part of it need to be changed? Are you committed to doing it and making it work?

### BREAK

Time: 10 min

# **Action Planning: Part 1**

(Appendix pp 73-75; Workbook pp 58-60) Time: 20 min

### **PURPOSE**

To learn about using the action plan as a tool.

### **INFORM**

The action planning process provides a framework to create your goals and expected outcomes and craft specific tasks that must be undertaken to achieve your outcomes. To be most effective, goals must be measurable and specific with clear accountabilities of persons responsible and time frames for achievement.

Action planning is an ongoing process, which does not end when the plan is completed. Rather, it is a tool to guide all plan implementation, monitor progress against goals and provide information for the next phase of capacity building.

# Action Planning for the Future...



#### Action Planning is a FRAMEWORK to:

- Create your goals & expected outcomes
- Craft specific tasks to achieve outcomes



Remind participants that you started by envisioning the destination and thinking about what needs to be done to get there. You can describe your goals more specifically using the action words on the **Writing Measurable Goals & Objectives** and the **Action Planning Guidelines** workbook pages.

### **Guidelines for Action Planning**

- Measurable and specific
- Outcome oriented
- Clear accountabilities
- Doable with a stretch
- Takes current resources into account

We suggest you develop detailed goals using these SMART guidelines

- Specific
- Measurable
- Achievable
- Realistic
- Time-bound

In other words, your goals have to go beyond saying that you plan to increase parent involvement. Think about specific outcomes that you hope to achieve. For instance:

- Do you want an easy and clear method for soliciting ideas and suggestions from parents and then implementing them in a timely manner?
- Do you want your agency staff to demonstrate parent involvement in their individual work plans?
- State the goal we chose in terms of a SMART goal.

You will be guiding the group through the action planning process using the worksheets in the books. Have the participants turn to **page 60** in their workbooks. Have them write the SMART goal you created in the top box of the Goal #1 table. Let them know you will now complete the form together.

# **Action Planning: Part 2**

(Appendix pp 76-77; Workbook pp 61-62) Time: 30 min

### PURPOSE

To practice using the action plan as a tool.

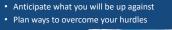
We have already discussed assessing our current reality. Refer back to that to remind yourself of your "starting point" in your parent leadership journey. It is also important to figure out what resources will be available to get you there – as well as which connections will help you go further.

Do you have relationships with people who can champion your goals?

On your Action Planning Worksheet, write down one or two obstacles that might keep you from your goal and one or two ideas to overcome those obstacles. Recall from the family goal setting that these ideas can turn into action steps.









**Define your goals** 

#### **Develop the Action Plan**



 Measurable & specific strategies
 Outcome oriented
 Clear accountabilities
 Doable with a stretch
 Takes current resources into account





#### **Implement Action Plan**



Now we are going to fill out the bottom section of the work plan. The strategies come from the ideas to overcome the obstacles and from the tasks we envisioned ourselves doing each day, week or month to get to our goal.

Write those strategies in the boxes to the left. Provide clear details throughout your action plans, using action-oriented terms from the handouts. Be sure to assign responsibilities and designate deadlines to help everyone stay on track and be accountable.

You may make some adjustments to this based on future feedback from other key stakeholders.

The next step is to begin to work on the tasks you have identified.

Once you have your plan in place, make a commitment to followthrough with it and hold everyone accountable for their portions of the plan. Things will come up along the way that will require you to make adjustments to the plan. Understand that this plan is flexible and can change.

Continuously monitor your progress and evaluate what is working and what is not.

Monitoring and evaluating your action plan is an ongoing process -

measuring your progress along the way and making mid-course corrections to get back on track, if necessary. And, as you see, the cycle continues until you reach your destination.

An in-depth analysis of your successes and challenges should also be completed once your goals have been achieved.

This information will be invaluable as you plan the next destination on your parent leadership journey.



#### **Monitor & Evaluate Plan**

Throughout the implementation AND upon completion of goals





# **Homework: Action Planning**

### **PURPOSE**

For participants to practice using the action planning tool on their own.

### ACTIVITY

Use the action planning charts labeled Goal # 2 and Goal #3 to plan for two of your family goals. (Workbook pp 61-62)

# Closing

Time: 5 min

#### Sources

- Family Focused Organizing: Self, Family & Team/Team Building; Community Organizing and Family Issues, 2004.
- Parent Leadership Ambassador Training Guide, produced by Circle of PARENTS for the FRIENDS National Resource Center for Community Based Child Abuse Prevention, 7.12



# **Cultural Responsiveness and Communication**

### Set Up:

- Arrange room for ease of conversation and sight and sound of the presentation
- Ensure laptop, speakers and projector are all connected and working (if available)
- Place sign-in sheet in a prominent place for people to sign when coming in

### Materials to prepare in advance:

- Separate sheets of flip chart paper with the headings: "Outspoken/Direct"; "Quiet/Reserved"; "Thoughtful/Analytical"; "Friendly/Unassuming"
- 4 copies of Handout "Communication Style Questionnaire" (Appendix p 80)

### **Other supplies:**

- Timer
- Markers
- Participant Workbook

Session lasts approximately 2 hours

# **Introduction to Cultural Responsiveness**

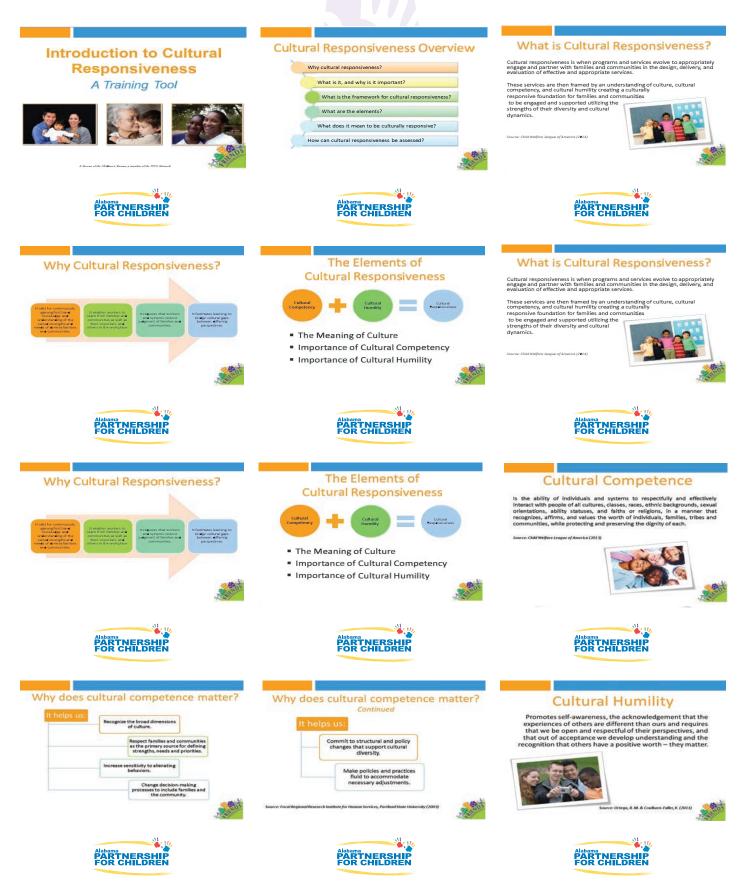
Time: 40 min

Ask participants to keep in their mind themselves and someone else whom they consider different from themselves as you go through the next slides. Read through and discuss as needed.

Let participants know that this section of the training is a little more filled with information than activity. However, we invite any comments and discussion at any time through this presentation. These are the topics we will be focusing on (read the slide). **Parent Leadership Network** 

Cultural Responsiveness and Communication









BREAK Time: 10 min

#### **Cultural Responsiveness and Communication**

#### **Activity: Communication Styles**

(Appendix pp 80; Workbook p 76) Time: 20 min

#### **PURPOSE**

To highlight the fact that different people have different communication styles and each has his or her own unique characteristics of communicating with others.



**Communication Styles Activity** 

#### ACTIVITY

Resources: Handout "Communication Style Questionnaire" **page 76**, flipchart paper on which to write the name of each communication styles, colored markers

- Before the activity begins, on four separate sheets of flipchart paper, write in large letters the name of each of the communication styles: Outspoken/Direct, Quiet/Reserved, Thoughtful/Analytical, and Friendly/Unassuming. Place these four signs on the walls of the room with one in each corner or, if not possible, at least far enough away from each other to allow groups of participants to gather and talk among themselves.
- 2. Begin the activity by explaining that we all have different communication styles. There is no one communication style that is right or wrong nor better or worse than the others. Communication styles have a great deal to do with one's personality and typically are complementary to each person's personality style.
- 3. Explain, at least for purposes of this activity, that there are four basic communication styles: Outspoken/Direct, Quiet/Reserved, Thoughtful/Analytical, and Friendly/Unassuming. Each is basically self-explanatory and describes a particular way that people communicate and are perceived. Ask participants to think about what their own particular communication style would be.
- 4. Ask participants to go to the part of the room where their communication style is posted. For example, each of the participants who identified themselves as being Thoughtful/Analytical should meet where this sign is posted. The other three styles should do the same.
- 5. After the members of each group have found each other and are assembled together, give each group a copy of **Handout "Communication Style Questionnaire"**, asking them to answer the questions together. Each team should assign a scribe to record the group's thoughts on the form.
- 6. After each group has completed answering the questions, ask each group to report their answers to the entire group. Each group should assign a spokesperson to do this.

Debrief: Emphasize how important it is to appreciate the fact that we all have our own communication styles that often are different and unique in some way. Just because someone has a different communication style doesn't mean that their style or yours for that matter is wrong. It just means that it is different. Better understanding and appreciation of these differences can make you a better communicator as well as help improve your relationships with others.

#### Speaking Powerfully

Time: 5 min

#### **PURPOSE**

To explain the reason for using the EPIC tool.

#### INFORM

97% of congressional staff says that in-person visits from constituents about issues influence policymakers, with 46% reporting it has a lot of influence. (Source: poll of more than 250 Congressional staff by the Congressional Management Foundation). If you visit a legislator, you are there to share a specific message.

#### Why Advocacy?

We stand by as children starve by the millions because we lack the will to eliminate hunger. Yet we have found the will to develop missiles capable of flying over the polar cap and landing within a few hundred feet of their target. This is not innovation. It is a profound distortion of humanity's purpose on earth.

– former Sen. Mark Hatfield (R-OR)





- Advocacy is creating political will
   Telling decision-makers what their priorities should be
- If we want something, we have to ask for it
- Every idea must have a voice
- Decision-makers are not all knowing
- Many times, they need to be educated just like everyone else



To speak powerfully is to speak with knowledge and confidence about a topic using clear and concise language in order to get your message across.

One tool to help us speak powerfully is the EPIC Laser Talk created by R.E.S.U.L.T.S. R.E.S.U.L.T.S. is a nonprofit grassroots advocacy organization working to create the political will to end poverty. Their goal is to empower individuals to have breakthroughs in exercising personal and political power and they have copyrighted the EPIC format for developing your personal message. The Ounce of Prevention Fund is an organization with the goal that all children living in America – particularly those born into poverty – have quality early childhood experiences in the crucial first five years of life. They have included the EPIC model in their Early Childhood Advocacy Toolkit.

#### **Activity: EPIC Laser Talk**

(Appendix p 81; Workbook p 84) Time: 2 min

#### PURPOSE

Use the Ounce of Prevention **EPIC** workbook page to illustrate how to construct a message to different types of stakeholders.

# Speaking Powerfully

# Ultimately...it's about change All major changes in social or economic policy, good or bad, happened because advocates did not give up until it happened — it's a long-term project Status quo, i.e. inertia, is a powerful force

Why Advocacy?





#### **EPIC Laser Talk**

- "You are not truly dangerous until you can speak powerfully." – RESULTS founder Sam Daley-Harris
- Learning to speak effectively about an issue is the first step in becoming a powerful advocate.
- It's one thing to know the issue, it is quite another to convey that knowledge effectively.



#### **EPIC Laser Talk**

- RESULTS has developed a tool to help you both organize your ideas into a quick, direct, and powerful talk – the EPIC Laser Talk
- EPIC = Engage  $\rightarrow$  Problem  $\rightarrow$  Inform  $\rightarrow$  Call to Action EPIC



#### ACTIVITY

Have the participants turn to **page 84** in their workbooks.

**E** is for Engage. Let participants know that, first, you want to get your listener's attention with a dramatic fact or short statement. Keep this opening statement to one sentence if possible. Have group members take turns reading the 3 different "E" statements to Lawmakers, Early Childhood Providers and Business Community.

**P** is for Problem. Next, you present causes of the problem you introduced in the first section. How widespread or serious is the problem? Have group members take turns reading the 3 different "P" statements to Lawmakers, Early Childhood Providers and Business Community.

I is for Inform. Inform the listener about a solution to the problem you just presented. Develop your solution with examples of how and where it has worked, how it is proven and cost-effective and how it has benefited people. Or, you could cite a recent study, or report or tell a first-person account of how the solution has impacted you or others you know. Have group members take turns reading the 3 different "I" statements to Lawmakers, Early Childhood Providers and Business Community.

**C** is for Call to Action. Finally, you tell the listener what action you would like him or her to take. Have group members take turns reading the 3 different "C" statements to Lawmakers, Early Childhood Providers and Business Community.

#### **EPIC Laser Talk**

Engage: One in four children under age 6 were living in poverty in 2011. Yet we know that investments in early childhood education can break the cycle of poverty.

#### Alabama PARTNERSHIP FOR CHILDREN

#### **EPIC Laser Talk**

Inform: Early childhood services like Head Start and child care work. Head Start's comprehensive services not only teach the child but support the whole family with nutrition education, health screenings and home visits. Nobel Prize winning economist James Heckman has shown that investments in early quality childhood services are one of the most cost effective investments society can make. Despite this, lawmakers in Washington continue to target Head Start and child care for budget cuts.



#### **EPIC Laser Talk**

#### E = Engage

After introducing yourself, you want to engage the listener into the conversation, i.e. get their attention

Brief and to the point—one sentence if possible

Use personal story, invoke a value, cite a statistic, thank



#### **EPIC Laser Talk**

- P = Problem
  - Now that you have gotten the person's attention, you want to identify the problem you want them to fix
  - Again, be brief, specific, and to the point

Identify the problem in language that leads to the solution you want



#### **EPIC Laser Talk**

l = Inform

You have identified the problem, now you want to lead them to the solution Can elaborate a little more here (2D4 sentences)

If you have a personal story to relate, this is the best place to do it Paint them a picture of the problem and/or the solution



#### **EPIC Laser Talk**

C = Call to Action

This is what everything you have said so far has led to

It answers the question "What do you want me to do?"

Be as specific as you can (bill number, amount, etc.)

Phrase in form of a YES or NO question so you get an answer



#### **Activity: Framing Your Message**

Time: 20 min

#### ACTIVITY

Assign pairs of participants to work on developing an EPIC message for a goal they wrote on their action plan. Participants can choose to deliver their message to a lawmaker, civic group, business owner, committee member, etc.

#### Closing

Time: 5 min

Raise Your Voice!	Sources	Frame Your Message Exercise
Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world. Indeed, it is the only thing that ever has. — anthropologist Margaret Mead	<ul> <li>Introduction to Cultural Competence: A Training Tool; FRIENDS National Resource Center for CBCAP, 2006.</li> <li>Early Childhood Advocacy Toolkit, The Ounce of Prevention Fund, 2009.</li> <li>Speaking Powerfully: The EPIC Laser Talk, RESULTS.</li> <li>Garber, Peter; 50 Communications Activities, Icebreakers, and Exercises. HDR Press, Inc.; Amherst, Massachusetts.</li> </ul>	The message needs to: Engage the Audience State the Problem Inform Others about Potential Solutions Call to Action Source: The EPIC format, trademarked by the grassroots advocacy organization RESULTS (www.results.org)
Alabama PARTNERSHIP FOR CHILDREN	Alabama PARTNERSHIP FOR CHILDREN	PARTNERSHIP FOR CHILDREN

#### **Harvest and Cultivation**

#### Set Up:

- Arrange room for ease of conversation and sight and sound of the presentation
- Ensure laptop, speakers and projector are all connected and working (if available)
- Place sign-in sheet in a prominent place for people to sign when coming in

#### Materials to prepare in advance:

 Separate sheets of flip chart paper with the headings: "Parental Resilience"; "Social Connections"; "Concrete Support in Times of Need"; "Knowledge of Parenting and Child Development"; "Social and Emotional Competence of Children"

#### **Other supplies:**

- Timer
- Markers
- Protective Factors Survey
- Leadership Post-Survey
- Workshop Evaluation Form
- Network Form
- APLN Description and Member Roles
- Local Group Information Form

#### Session lasts as long as needed.

#### **Activity: Harvest**

Time: 15 min

#### PURPOSE

Review and reflection.

#### ACTIVITY

Post the pre-written flip chart pages on the wall around the room. Have participants reflect on what they have gained/learned throughout



the workshop by writing their harvest items where appropriate. Review each flip chart page. Remind the group of any main points of the sessions that weren't written on the charts. Celebrate the knowledge and relationships gained.

#### **Activity: Protective Factors Survey**

Time: 10 min

#### **PURPOSE**

Participants will take a self-administered survey that measures protective factors in five areas: resiliency, social support, concrete support, nurturing and attachment, and knowledge of parenting/ child development. The survey compares participants' attitudes and knowledge at the beginning of the program with their attitudes and knowledge today.



#### ACTIVITY

- Pass out surveys for participants to complete
- Collect the surveys when they are finished

#### Activity: Leadership Post-test and Workshop Evaluation

Time: 10 min

#### **PURPOSE**

To gain information about the impact and effectiveness of the workshop.

#### ACTIVITY

- Pass out Leadership post-test and evaluation for participants to complete
- Collect them when they are completed

#### Where Are We?

Please take a moment to complete the Parent Leadership Survey and Workshop Evaluation.





#### **Activity: Cultivation**

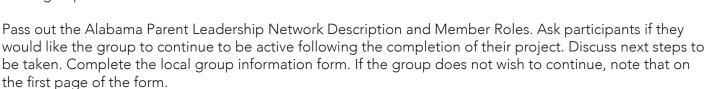
Time: as long as needed

#### **PURPOSE**

To discuss the next steps for the participants and the group.

#### ACTIVITY

Have the group complete a project form to finalize their plans and responsibilities. Set a graduation date after the date the project will be completed. Try to coordinate one inclusive graduation event for all APLN groups in the area.



After this session, notify the Alabama Parent Leadership Network Liaison of the dates of the group's project and graduation. Send all completed forms (sign-in sheets, protective factors surveys, parent leadership surveys, community project form, local group information form, and workshop evaluations) to the Liaison.

#### Closing

Time: 5 min







# APPENDIX

# **INTRODUCTION WORKSHEET**

Who Are We Traveling With?

1. Who are you? What would you like the group to know about you?

2. What is your current involvement with parent leadership?

#### 3. What do you want to get from your participation? What do you hope to gain by participating in the training?

\*Before introducing your partner to the group, check to make sure the personal information they shared is OK to share with the large group.

#### **Protective Factors: A Framework for Prevention**

**Strategies:** The following items can be enlarged for printing purposes, and each one is cut onto a slip of paper for the activity.

Comfortable space for families to meet informally Set up formal and informal communications (phone tree, car pools) Connects families with similar interests, ages, circumstances Provide opportunities for affordable activities and programs for dads, grandparents, teen parent Provide support for parent organized events and support such as space, childcare, food Staff reaches out to isolated families by calling, sending notes, home visits Staff makes special effort to connect isolated families with other families Program helps resolve issues among families Program models promoting understanding of different cultures and backgrounds Parenting information is available through resource library Parenting information is available through parenting classes and discussion groups Parenting information is available with regular postings on bulletin board in public places Parenting information is available for parents with similar concerns to come together & share Specific parenting info is available on Back to Sleep, SIDS, Shaken Baby Staff is knowledgeable about the parenting practices of different cultures and ethnic groups Opportunities created for parents to explore how they were parented & new parenting practices Teachers share parenting tips & discuss issues with parents during pick up/ drop off time Staff spends time when parents are observing to talk about children's growth and development Staff spends time when parents are observing to talk about activities they can use at home Information is provided on regular developmental challenges Staff talks with parents about discipline, info on age appropriate expectations, offer alternatives Staff talks with parents about discipline challenges they may have at home Staff acknowledges concerns about parenting/frustrating behavior and recognizes parents' efforts When concerned about parenting, staff connects parent to resource needed to address parenting When concerned about parenting, staff connects parent to others to model positive approaches For parents of special needs children, staff is sensitive to parents feelings & acknowledges challenges For parents of special needs children, provide speaker/resources on topics of interest/concern For parents of special needs children, ensure that parent-child activities are appropriate Staff develops personal relationships by taking time to get to know families The message parents can turn to staff in the event of a crisis is conveyed informally/formally Staff responds to family crisis immediately by ensuring a staff person is available at all times Staff responds to family crisis by making space available to meet with parents privately Staff responds to family crisis by ensuring parent can talk with staff they are most comfortable The program provides resource and referral links to concrete crisis services Staff knows how to respond to crisis by receiving training on resolving conflicts Staff knows how to respond to crisis and is trained on talking about difficult issues

Staff recognizes Domestic Violence, Depression, Developmental Delays, Mental Illness, Chronic Health Problems, and Sexual Abuse

Staff proactively responds to signs of parent or family distress, express concern and offer help Staff proactively responds to signs of parent distress by making themselves available to talk Staff proactively responds to signs of parent distress by sharing info about parent help-line Staff receives support when working with families under stress by acknowledging staff efforts Staff receives support when working with families under stress to process their own emotions Staff develops plans with parents identifying interests, skills, needs, goals for themselves/children Identifies services/opportunities within program that helps families achieve their goals Staff has current info on services in the community including hours, fees, locations, eligibility When staff makes referrals to outside services they help parents address barriers to accessing When staff makes referrals to outside services they follow up to see if satisfied with services When staff makes referrals they make a personal connection between families/service providers Program encourages parents to share info with toy exchanges/resale shop/family activities Program uses social/emotional curricula to encourage expressing feelings/share/take turns Parents are introduced to social/emotional developmental curricula at start of year & informed of its importance Program helps parents understand age appropriate social/emotional skills/behaviors Program offers ideas on how to foster a child's social and emotional learning at home Teaches parents about social/emotional development through parenting classes/informal discussions Staff encourages children to express their feelings through words, artwork and expressive play Staff models behavior toward children that encourages social and emotional expressiveness If staff is concerned about social and emotional development, discuss with parents Staff is trained to recognize early signs of child abuse and neglect Staff explains the reporting process to the family and describes how CPS typically responds Staff acts as advocates for families with the system when possible Staff helps families find suitable respite care and/or emergency crisis service Parents are active in making decisions about their children's education Staff gets to know parents individually and regularly inquire about how they are doing Staff gets to know all family members by name Parents have the opportunity to volunteer and contribute to the program Parents have opportunity to share skills/talents/cultural traditions with children/other parents Parents have regular opportunities to engage in activities in program space Parents have opportunity to participate in parent social activities/ activities to relieve stress Program offers specific activities for fathers, mothers and other family members Program offers specific activities that get fathers involved Opportunities to discuss how they were parented and how it affects the way they parent Staff recognizes parents' growth and efforts Program provides parents opportunities for leadership development Program provides parents opportunities for input into programmatic decisions Program provides parents opportunities to participate in staff hiring and training

# LEADERSHIP: WHERE DO YOU STAND?

#### A quality you are born with

Something you learn



noun

1. A person who has commanding authority or influence.

# 5 LEVELS OF LEADERSHI

### The Parent Leadership Ladder

Beginning the Journey

Creating Avenues for Parent Involvement and Participation

Parent Leadership Activities Leading to the Road of Success

Laying the Foundation for the Road to Success

Maintaining Organizational Parent Leadership Policies – The Map to Success

Practicing and Encouraging Shared Leadership – Staying on the Road to Success

HUNISHIN

#### **Development of the Parent Leadership Ladder**

"The Yellow Brick Road to leadership is a winding path of adventure, challenge and wonderment leading to the realization of what wonderful skills you possess – Knowledge, Courage and a Heart filled with Passion!"

#### I. Beginning the Adventure:

- Parent Involvement
- Parent Engagement
- Parent Leadership

#### II. Creating Avenues for Parent Involvement and Participation:

#### Focus Groups

"The common thread of interest helps to stitch the comforter of friendship which can be forever lasting."

- Parents of Children with Special Needs
- Kinship
- Fathers
- Incarcerated Parents
- Single Parents
- Resource Families
- Parents of Teens
- Hispanic Parents
- Teen Parents

#### Valued Activities and Program Enhancement

- Family outings
- "Date Night"
- Informal respite care
- Community group activities
- "Kids Day"
- Collaborations with Universities
- Workshops
- Trainings
- Community Service

#### III. Parent Leadership Activities Leading to the Road of Success:

#### Support Groups

- Examples of activities parents/kin can be involved in
- Provide the opportunities and offering encouragement
- Create opportunities for success
- Mentor
- Celebrate the successes in their leadership role!!!!!

#### > Program Opportunities to Participate in

- Advisory council
- Program volunteer positions
- Newsletter articles
- Mentor other families in the program
- Volunteer opportunities
- Website maintenance
- Program committees
- Policy committees
- Agency materials development teams
- Peer Reviews
- Fundraising events

#### Community Councils

- Volunteer opportunities
- Fundraisers
- Community events Grandparents Day at the Zoo, Foster Affair Events, etc.
- Holiday events for families
- Volunteer work in the community

#### > Community, State and National Advisory Councils and Task Forces

- Member
- Chairperson
- Co-Chairperson
- Officer

#### State and National Conferences

- Attendee
- Host/Hostess agency booth
- Presenter
- Member of conference planning committee

#### Legislative and Advocacy Opportunities

- Attend advocacy events
- Member of advocacy event committee

- Host/Hostess for advocacy event
- Present at advocacy events
- Attend political rallies
- Provide legislative testimony

#### IV. Laying the Foundation for the Road to Success:

"Success in leadership rest on a foundation built and honed with the tools of skills and knowledge."

#### > Effective Communication

- Barriers to effective communication
- Keys to active listening
- Effective feedback
- Non-verbal communication skills

#### Problem Solving

- Define the problem
- Verify your understanding of the problems
- Understand your role in the problem
- Look at potential causes for the problem
- Identify alternatives for approaches to resolve the problem
- Select an approach to resolve the problem
- Plan the implementation of the best alternative
- Monitor implementation of the plan

#### Decision Making

### "Just as people are different, so are their styles of decision making. Each person is a result of all of the decisions made in their life to date."

- Do not make decisions that are not yours to make.
- Avoid snap decisions. Move fast on the reversible ones and slowly on the non reversible.
- Do your decision making on paper. Make notes and keep your ideas visible so you can consider all the relevant information in making this decision.
- Be sure to choose based on what is right, not who is right.
- Consider those affected by your decision.
- Trust yourself to make a decision and then be able to field the consequences.

#### Self-Management

- Monitor work/volunteer responsibilities and learn to set limits
- Recognize signs of stress
- Get a coach/mentor
- Learn to be assertive
- Recognize accomplishments!!!!!!

#### V. Maintaining Organizational Parent Leadership Policies – The Map to Success

- Agency's and/or program's responsibility to define roles and opportunities for parent leaders in your organization.
- Agency and/or program should provide and reflect the responsibilities and benefits to the parent leaders.
- Agency and/or program should have a high priority to provide for special needs of parent leaders such as stipends, assistance with transportation, child care and how parent leaders are made aware of this in a respectful way.
- Agency and/or program should provide internal and external resources to help parent leaders develop and maintain their skills. Resources should be offered at the local, state and national level.
- Agency and/or program should implement mentoring and shadowing opportunities for parent leaders along with a strong well trained staff to support and supervise the parent leaders.

#### VI. Practicing and Encouraging Shared Leadership – the Bolts of Staying on the Road to Success

- Agency's and/or program's commitment to the mission on shared leadership and parent leadership should be known throughout the organization and the state.
- Opportunities for everyone in the organization, including parent leaders, to facilitate, guide, and coach others to adopt practices that reflect the goals of your mission.
- The agency and/or program staff should all be committed and working together to outline and implement opportunities for parent leadership to occur.
- The agency empowers parent leaders to help shape the direction of your activities.
- The agency and/or program should encourage consensus building on new ideas and/ or solutions on a regular basis which include both staff, community partners and parent leaders.

# WHY DO WE NEED PARENT INVOLVEMENT?



- 1. What are the benefits **for parents and families** when parents are involved in leadership and decision-making?
- 2. What are the benefits **for agencies** when parents are involved in leadership and decision-making?

# TRUE LEADER COLORS Examining Leaders

A	Receptive	Genuine	Agreeable	
B	Practical	Responsible	Established	
C	Complex	Intelligent	Logical	
D	Easily Bored	Spontaneous	Active	
A	Tender	Devoted	Open	
B	Faithful	Conservative	Reliable	
C	Calm	Abstract	Curious	
D	Impulsive	Energetic	Bold	
A	Cooperative	Romantic	Friendly	
B	Sensible	Efficient	Trustworthy	
C	Innovative	Cool	Inventive	
D	Broad-minded	Skilled	Daring	
A	Good natured	Sincere	Easy-going	
B	Organized	Patriotic	Dependable	
C	Ingenious	Work-Is Play	Academic	
D	Qualified	Adventurous	Competent	
A	Sympathetic	Nurturing	Creative	
B	Stable	Loyal	Traditional	
C	Conceptual	Proficient	Original	
D	Tolerant	Competitive	Enterprising	

#### Circle one word that describes you from each box below.

Look horizontally (left to right) across the three columns and add up the number of words circled in each line (A, B, C, D). Record the total in the box to the right of the line.

Add up the numbers recorded in each lettered column above and record those numbers in the box below.

A	В	С	D

Your dominant color is the highest total. My dominant color is: \_\_\_\_\_ Your supporting color is the next highest total. My supporting color is: \_\_\_\_\_

### TRUE LEADER COLORS Examining Leaders

#### Understanding Our Colors in the Council

#### BLUES

Their strengths include their ability to persuade and cooperate. These are the team builders. Their weaknesses include an over-personalization of organizational problems and their tendency to carry grudges.

#### GREENS

Their strengths include their ability to think systematically and strategically. These are the natural analysts. Their weaknesses include their tendency to make things more complex than necessary and their impatience with incompetence.

#### GOLDS

Their strengths include their strong sense of responsibility and duty to the organization. These are the organization's backbone. Their weaknesses include their rigidity and narrow focus on meeting rules and regulations.

#### **ORANGES**

Their strengths include their ability to do a variety of tasks with ease and their sense of urgency when the situation demands it. These are the organizational troubleshooters. Their weaknesses include their disinterest in routine and being too present-oriented, at the expense of long-term thinking.

<ul> <li>Succeeding with the Orange Individual:</li> <li>A direct right-to-the-point approach gets their attention</li> <li>Respect their lack of structure and need for spontaneity</li> <li>Get involved in physical activities with them</li> <li>Compliment their generosity and sense of humor</li> </ul>	<ul> <li>Succeeding with the Blue Individual:</li> <li>O Respect their need to know about you</li> <li>O Take a creative approach to problem solving</li> <li>O Be truthful and sincere</li> <li>O Cooperate with other team members</li> <li>O Show that you value and appreciate them through thoughtfulness</li> <li>O Be helpful, open, and communicative</li> </ul>
<ul> <li>Succeeding with the Gold Individual:</li> <li>O Be organized and neat in work and appearance</li> <li>O Be truthful</li> <li>O Plan ahead of them</li> <li>O Don't beat around the bush; be up front</li> <li>O Respect their need for tradition and stability</li> <li>O Be loyal and dependable. Support their need for structure and security</li> </ul>	<ul> <li>Succeeding with the Green Individual:</li> <li>O Respect their preoccupation with ideas and logic</li> <li>O Know that they care but may not express feelings freely</li> <li>O Respect their wisdom and knowledge</li> <li>O Think ahead; Greens appreciate future orientation</li> <li>O Help them with day-to-day details</li> <li>O Praise their ingenuity and intelligence</li> </ul>

### **Answer the following questions:**

1. What do you remember about your first parent leadership interaction?

2. What was exciting about being involved?

3. What was frustrating about it?

4. How was this important to you?

5. What keeps you coming back?

# ALABAMA PARENT LEADERSHIP NETWORK BENEFITS OF PARENT INVOLVEMENT



- 1. Parents win!
- 2. Organizations win!
- 3. Kids win!
- 4. Communities win!

Benefits for parents to be involved:

Benefits for agencies when parents are involved:

# HOW DO YOU SEE ME?

What are the myths, biases and assumptions made about <b>parents</b> ?	What are the myths, biases and assumptions made about <b>practitioners</b> ?

#### 1. What do you think are the most common biases in your community about parents?

#### 2. About practitioners?

# ALABAMA PARENT LEADERSHIP NETWORK REFLECTION: HOW DO YOU SEE ME

1. What does this exercise tell us about the challenges of implementing parent leadership?

2. What do the comments reveal about stereotypes and/or assumptions that are sometimes held between parents and practitioners?

3. What practical steps could you take to begin to breakdown these stereotypes and assumptions?

4. If an organization creates a supportive, strength-based environment, how might these assumptions change?

# FAMILY FEUD! CATEGORIES Common Fears and Challenges

#### **Common Parent Fears**

- I won't fit in.
- They won't value my input.
- Nothing will change.
- How can I arrange for child care, transportation?
- I'll have to take time off work. What is expected from me?
- I won't know what they are talking about or what they are doing.
- I have nothing to offer!
- What do they <u>really</u> want from me?

#### **Common Agency Fears**

- Have to "dumb down" our work for parents to understand.
- They'll be disruptive and have axes to grind.
- Need to make too many concessions to function.
- Other agencies will not accept their input as valid Confidentiality and sensitive issues.
- The 'higher ups' won't allow it.
- No place for them in our hierarchical system.
- You can't trust them. They will lie, cheat and steal.

#### **Challenges for Parents and Families**

- Child care needs
- Transportation, financial limits, work schedules
- Fear of new situations
- Jealousy of family or friends
- Intimidated by system
- Unfamiliar with language, protocol, or system
- Tokenism
- Over utilization of parent

#### **Challenges for Programs and Professionals**

- Conflicts with parent's schedules or jobs
- Possible increase in cost for stipends, etc
- Training needs for staff/Training needs for parents
- Child care
- Transportation
- Financial limits
- Parent is not polished or professional
- Intimidated by parents
- Kids brought to meetings
- Making rules applicable to everyone
- Over utilization of one parent

# FAMILY FEUD! CATEGORIES Common Barriers to Parent Leadership

#### Attitudes:

- Staff and parents fear confrontation if things "go wrong"
- Parents don't trust the providers
- Providers think parents are too overwhelmed to participate
- Providers aren't willing to accept parents as equals
- Providers are paternalistic
- Parents think they have nothing to contribute
- Providers worry that parents will violate confidentiality

#### **System Barriers:**

- A lack of resources is available for supporting parent involvement
- No system is in place for paying parents
- Staff time can only be paid during regular working hours

#### Logistics:

- The program can't pay for child care
- Transportation is unavailable for parents to get to meetings
- Meetings are held only during working hours
- Parents aren't reimbursed for the time they take off work to attend meetings

#### Lack of Skills:

- Parents have never participated in these types of activities
- Parents are unaware of procedures
- Providers aren't ready to work with parents in new ways
- There's a lack of information about the roles of parents and providers

Shared by Parents Helping Parents, Boston, MA 02116. Adapted by "Making Room at the Table" from Family Support America

# FAMILY FEUD! CATEGORIES Parent and Practitioner Roles

#### **Parent Roles**

- Member of task forces
- Co-trainers for staff development
- Mentors for other families
- Participants in needs assessments
- Community advocates
- Members of hiring committees
- Participants at conferences and working groups
- Meeting participants in quality improvement
- Initiatives public speaker
- Board members
- Paid program staff
- Grant reviewers
- Reviewers of written materials
- Participants in focus groups
- Fund raisers

#### **Practitioner Roles**

- Mentor
- Coach
- Leading from the "side" (with explicit permission from the parent) and supporting parents as they develop confidence in their leadership abilities
- Providing appropriate articles and other resources to build the skills and knowledge of parents
- Arranging for parents to attend formal and information training sessions
- Providing positive feedback and constructive criticism to parents will encourage further participation and will provide concrete ideas for increasing their leadership expertise
- Looking for opportunities to involve parents in traditional and non-traditional ways in agency initiatives
- Helping others in your agency understand and embrace the principles and benefits to implementing parent engagement initiatives

### **Balloon Burdens Activity Scenarios**

- 1. She has been attending the local parent support group for some time, and has recently begun leading the group. Her local CBCAP provider comes to her and says that since she has taken on quite a leadership role in the agency, she would like for her to help on a statewide level by becoming a part of the Parent Leadership Council. Even though she is nervous, she is happy that they have asked her and agrees.
- 2. The first meeting is held on a Tuesday at 9:00am. This is a very bad time for her, since she usually gets the kids off to school and then heads in to work. She is a single mom, and is solely responsible for the kid's morning routines. She talks with her neighbor about taking the kids to school that day.
- 3. To try to get off work for the meeting, she asks her boss if she can come in late that morning. "Sure," he says, "but, remember that you'll be doing this without pay." This will really impact her budget, but she feels like she wants to follow through on her commitment.
- 4. She finds out that the meeting is held across town, and she isn't sure if she will have enough gas money to pay to get there. She sits down and looks at her budget, and figures out a way to scrimp and save for the trip.
- 5. She finds out that the practitioner that she has been working with won't be able to come to the meeting after all, and that she'll have to go in alone. She is fearful that she will not be able to find the room, and that everyone will look at her funny!
- 6. The day before the meeting, she gets a call from the agency to remind her. They tell her that the dress code will be "business casual," and that everyone is chipping in \$5 for lunch. She isn't sure what business casual means, but is sure that nothing in her wardrobe is considered business. With no time to plan, she decides that she will call her friend to see if there is anything she can borrow. "Sure," her friend says, "but I am working second shift and won't be home until midnight. You can come over then." She again has to figure out childcare so she can go meet her friend.
- 7. With not much money for gas, and since she is taking time off work without pay, an extra \$5 for lunch is a lot. She breaks into her daughter's piggy bank for the quarters and writes an IOU.
- 8. The morning of the meeting, her neighbor calls to say that she can't take the kids to school after all. She scrambles to find another way for them to get there, and finally is able to call her cousin. Her cousin agrees hesitantly, to take the kids to school.
- 9. Driving across town for the meeting, she gets lost on the freeway. She isn't used to driving in this part of town, but is finally able to get there, 10 minutes after the meeting has started.
- 10. She parks on the street, since she realizes that parking is an extra \$10. She is afraid that she will get a ticket, but has no choice since she cannot pay the \$10 to pull in the pay lot.
- 11. When she walks in the room, everyone has already started. They all know each other, and she feels strange being the only one who doesn't know anyone. She suddenly wishes that her pants fit better, and she weren't so flustered!
- 12 When she is in the meeting, she is asked to introduce herself and tell something about herself. She feels very self-conscious about talking in front of everyone, but everyone seems nice and smiles at her when she talks.

- 13. Once the meeting has started, everyone starts using strange language! There are lots of acronyms and names that she doesn't understand, but she tries to keep up. The woman beside her tries to explain as things go along, but she doesn't want to be a distraction or look stupid.
- 14. "When the meeting ends, they ask her for any parent input she wanted to share." Since she was not sure what they had been talking about most of the meeting, she says she has no input. She feels badly that she does not have anything to add.
- 15. They set up the next meeting time for a Wednesday at 2:30, which means that she'll have to get off work again and get someone to pick the kids up from school.
- 16. Leaving the training, she realizes that she did get a parking ticket after all!

### **Concrete Support in Times of Need**

#### **Family Scenario 1**

Angela is a 20 year old college student with one son, Bryson. Bryson began attending your center when he was 6 weeks old, and he is now 15 months. Angela's boyfriend, Sam, is somewhat involved in Bryson's life. Angela and Sam are engaged and say they are getting married "soon," but currently live in two separate households. Lately, Angela seems more stressed out, and is having a hard time dealing with Bryson's new toddler like personality. She says she wishes she had other parents in her shoes to talk to about Bryson.

#### **Family Scenario 2**

Sally and Bob Martin have been retired for 4 years. Their social security income isn't going as far as they thought it would. Each month they struggle to pay the bills and put food on the table. Sally has high blood pressure and is a borderline diabetic. Bob walks with a cane and may have to have knee surgery. 6 months ago their only daughter Jenny, was arrested on drug charges. Child Protective Services placed Jenny's 4 children with Sally and Bob. The children range in age from 7 to 1 year old. The two youngest are in daycare. The 3 year old is not potty trained and is very timid. She sits alone most days and does not play with the other children. The one year old is not walking but still manages to throw major tantrums and has to be watched around the other children for biting and hitting.

1. Something your parents did that made you happy.

2. Something you wish they had done, but didn't.

Emotional health provides a foundation for success in school, work, marriage, and life in general. Failure to recognize and satisfy these five needs jeopardizes our children's future and that of succeeding generations. The five critical needs as a family value contribute to a healthy family environment and strengthen us as a nation.

A summary of the five critical needs, including a definition and examples of each, are provided below.

#### **Need to Feel Respected**

Children need to feel respected. For that to happen, they need to be treated in a courteous, thoughtful, attentive and civil manner. One of the best ways for children to learn about respect is to feel what it's like to be treated respectfully and to observe their parents and other adults treating one another the same way. If we want children to grow up feeling respected and treating others with respect, we need to:

- avoid sarcasm, belittling, and yelling;
- keep anger and impatience to a minimum;
- avoid lying;
- listen more and talk less;
- command less and suggest and request more;
- learn to say: "please," "thank you," "excuse me", and "I'm sorry" yes, even to children; and
- become conscious of our mistakes, willing to admit them and ready to make corrections.

This will help us cultivate these values in our children.

#### Need to Feel Important

Feeling important refers to a child's need to feel: "I have value. I am useful. I have power. I am somebody." This need is evident at a very early age.

Pressing a button in an elevator – "Me, me." Children want to do things for themselves, and so often we get in their way. Parents need to avoid being all powerful, solving all family problems, making all decisions, doing all the work, and controlling everything that happens.

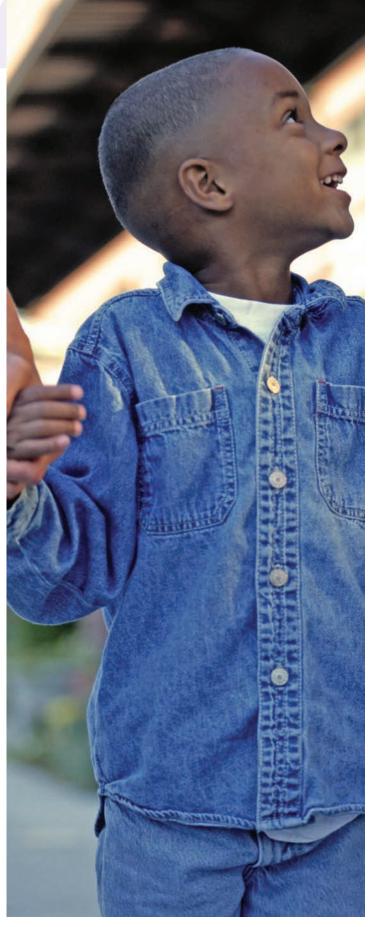
Involve your children – ask their opinions: give them things to do; share decisionmaking and power; give them status and recognition, and have patience with mistakes when it takes a little longer or is not done as well as you could have done yourself. If children do not feel important, if they don't develop a sense of value in constructive ways, they may seek negative ways to get attention, to feel "I am somebody."

#### **Need to Feel Accepted**

Children have a need to feel accepted as individuals in their own right, with their own uniqueness, and not treated as mere reflections of their parents; as objects to be shaped in the image of what parents believe their ideal child should look like.

This means that children have a right to their own feelings, opinions, ideas, concerns, wants, and needs. Trivializing, ignoring, or ridiculing a child's feelings or opinions is a rejection which weakens the relationship.

Paying attention to and discussing them, even when you do not like or disagree with some, strengthens the relationship.



#### Need to Feel Included

How to Raise

Emotionally

**Healthy Children** 

Emotionally Healthy Children

In Joy

Children need to feel included. They need to be brought in, to be made to feel a part of things, to feel connected to other people, and to have a sense of community. It happens when people engage with others in activities and projects, when they experience things together in a meaningful way. It is important for the family to create these opportunities. People who do things together feel closer to one another. Family activities offer a way to become closer and also have fun, learn, and contribute to others.

**Need to Feel Secure** 

How to Raise

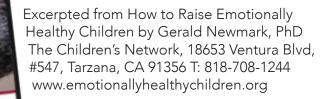
Emotionally Healthy Children

In Joy

Children need to feel secure. Security means creating a positive environment where people care for each other and show it, where people express themselves and others listen, where differences are accepted and conflicts are resolved constructively, where enough structure exists for

children to feel safe and protected,

and where children have opportunities to actively participate in their own and family evolution through family planning and decision making, problem solving, and feedback activities.



### Scenarios for Helping Children Develop Social Interaction Skills

#### **Empathy:**

You help your children notice other's feelings. For example, Yvonne takes away Alan's toy. Alan cries. You say, "Look, Alan is sad because he really wants to play with that toy. Let's get another one for you so you can both play."

#### Self-awareness:

You help your children notice their own feelings and needs. Jackie starts to cry when you tell her she can't have the doll in the store. You say, "Jackie, I know you are sad because you really like the doll and want it AND we aren't going to get it now. We can put it on the list for later. Would you like that?"

#### **Manage Emotions:**

You help your child find ways to get into a better place when they are angry or sad. LeBron starts to yell and throw a tantrum when he doesn't get what he wants. You say, "LeBron, I know you are upset now. Would you like to go to your cool down place? There is your chair and your pillow. When you are feeling better, we can talk."

#### Self-regulation:

You help your child help him or herself. Your daughter, Sarah, is upset because she had a bad grade. You say, "Sarah, I know you are upset with the grade. What did you learn about how to study this time? How can you improve for next time? If you need help, let me know."

#### **Build Relationships:**

You provide time for your child to interact with others. You observe them, and you notice that your child perhaps needs support. When necessary, you can intervene without taking over. You sometimes suggest things like," Why don't you see if Antoine wants to help you with that?"; "Could you and Deanna help pick up the toys and put them in a box?"

Think about some of the things you are doing to support your children. Write those things under What I do, and then think about the impact it is having and can have on your children. Write those ideas and observations under Impact.

What I do	Impact

# ALABAMA PARENT LEADERSHIP NETWORK TAKING CARE OF YOURSELF

1. Jot down ways you take care of yourself now!

2. New ideas...

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ALABAMA PARENT LEADERSHIP NETWORK		
MY FAMILY GOALS		
1. In 10 years, we will:		
2. In 3 years, we will:		
3. In 3 months, I hope that we will:		
4. Who else do I want to involve in planning goals for my family?		

## Parent Leadership Ambassador Training Guide WRITING MEASURABLE GOALS & OBJECTIVES

#### **Avoid Weasel Words:**

Be aware of
Have an awareness of
Be conversant with
Be familiar with
Display a broad and full grasp of
Develop awareness (understanding)

Have a grasp of Have knowledge of Be prepared for a variety of Have a good sense of Understand Have an understanding of

#### **Use Action Verbs:**

Add	Criticize
Advance	Dance
Alter	Deduce
Analyze	Define
Annotate	Demonstrate
Apply	Derive
Appraise	Design
Arrange	Determine
Assign	Differentiate
Assay	Discriminate
Assess	Dissect
Calculate	Distinguish
Canvass	Divide
Change	Draw
Check	Earn
Choose	Employ
Classify	Estimate
Collect	Exercise
Combine	Exert
Compare	Expand
Compose	Extrapolate
Contrast	Find
Convert	Form
Create	Generate

Give Hold Identify Illustrate Include Integrate Interpolate Interpret Judge Justify Label List Locate Make Manipulate Match Mobilize Modify Multiply Name Negotiate Offer Omit Operate

Perform Pick Plan Point Predict Produce Network Propose Qualify Quantify Quote Rate Read Recite Referee Repeat Reproduce Restate Reveal Revise Section Select Separate Show

Sift Sketch Sort Speak Specify Spell State Strike Subtract Summarize Support Synthesize Teach Tell Test Touch Transfer Transform Translate Use Weigh Write

## **ACTION PLANNING GUIDELINES**

Once you have identified an issue and made a commitment to do something about it, you need to plan what action you are going to take.

Some points to remember when making action plans:

- Plans need to be explicit and detailed. Write an action plan using lots of action words.
- A timeline must be included in the action plan. Be sure to list a start/complete date for each step in the plan. This will help everyone stay on track. The dates can be changed or adjusted as the plan progresses.
- Assign tasks or steps to specific individuals who will be responsible for making sure that they are done on time.
- Write the action plan. This will allow members to refer to the plan and facilitate sharing information and progress. This does not mean that the plan cannot be changed as needed. Plans need to be flexible.
- Plans also need to be revised upon new or unforeseen challenges or opportunities. Monitor the organization's progress over time against the plan to appreciate what has been accomplished and determine what steps will still need to be taken to reach the goal. Action planning is a process.

## Parent Leadership Ambassador Training Guide ACTION PLANNING WORKSHEET

Goal #1				
Obstacle	Solutions/Ideas	to Overcome O	bstacles	
1				
2				
3			1	
Strategies	By Whom	By When	Resources/Support Needed	Done

## Parent Leadership Ambassador Training Guide ACTION PLANNING WORKSHEET

Goal #2				
Obstacle	Solutions/Ideas to C	overcome Ob	ostacles	
1				
2				
3				
Strategies	By Whom	By When	Resources/Support Needed	Done

## Parent Leadership Ambassador Training Guide ACTION PLANNING WORKSHEET

Goal #3				
Obstacle	Solutions/Ideas t	o Overcome O	bstacles	
1				
2				
3				
Strategies	By Whom	By When	Resources/Support Needed	Done

#### **Description:**

Participants are asked to form into groups according to their communication styles: Outspoken/Direct, Quiet/Reserved, Thoughtful/Analytical, and Friendly/Unassuming.

#### Time Guideline:

45 minutes

#### **Purpose:**

To highlight the fact that different people have different communication styles and each has his or her own unique characteristics of communicating with others.

#### **Resources:**

Handout **p 80**. A room large enough for each group of communication styles to be able to meet and discuss their particular communication style. Flipchart paper on which to write the name of each of the communication styles. Colored markers.

#### **Presentation:**

1. Before the activity begins, on four separate pieces of flipchart paper, write in large letters the name of each of the communication styles: Outspoken/Direct, Quiet/Reserved,Thoughtful/ Analytical, and Friendly/Unassuming. Place these four signs on the walls of the room with one in each corner or, if not possible, at least far enough away from each other to allow groups of participants to gather and talk among themselves.

2. Begin the activity by explaining that we all have different communication styles. There is no one communication style that is right or wrong nor better or worse than the others. Communication styles have a great deal to do with one's personality and typically are complementary to each person's personality style.

3. Explain, at least for purposes of this activity, that there are four basic communication styles: Outspoken/Direct, Quiet/Reserved, Thoughtful/ Analytical, and Friendly/Unassuming. Each is basically self-explanatory and describes a particular



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way that people communicate and are perceived. Ask participants to think about what their own particular communication style would be.

4. Ask participants to go to the part of the room where their communication style is posted. For example, each of the participants who identified themselves as being Thoughtful/Analytical should meet where this sign is posted. The other three styles should do the same.

5. After the members of each group have found each other and are assembled together, give each group a copy of Handout **p 80**, asking them to answer the questions together. Each team should assign a scribe to record the group's thoughts on the form.

6. After each group has completed answering the questions, ask each group to report their answers to the entire group. Each group should assign a spokesperson to do this.

#### **Debrief:**

Emphasize how important it is to appreciate the fact that we all have our own communication style that often is different and unique in some way. Just because someone has a different communication style doesn't mean that their style or yours for that matter is wrong. It just means that it is different. Better understanding and appreciation of these differences can make you a better communicator as well as help improve your relationships with others.

#### **Difficulty Rating:**

Editor: None stated

#### Variations:

While communication style groups are still together, ask them the following question: if your communication style had a T-shirt, what would it say and what picture/graphic might it have on it? Provide each group with a piece of flipchart paper and color markers and ask them to draw a picture of this T-shirt.



## COMMUNICATION STYLE QUESTIONNAIRE

1. What is your group's communication style?

2. What are some of the characteristics of your group's communication style?

3. In what ways is your communication style sometimes misunderstood by others?

4. How could others who have different communication styles deal more effectively with you?

5. What would you like to tell the other communication styles about your style?

The following chart shows how you can frame your message for different audiences. If, for example, you operate an early childhood program and are trying to develop support for a bill that provides capital funds to build new early childhood facilities, you would want to tailor your message to lawmakers, practitioners, and the business community. Here is how you would use the EPIC approach.

	Lawmakers	Early Childhood Practitioners	Business Community
<b>Engage the Audience</b> Identify the audience you are trying to influence. Choose information and language that will resonate with the audience and help it understand the issues.	I am your constituent and the director of an early learning program in your district that provides services to more than 100 children and their families in our community.	As a fellow early childhood professional, you are likely concerned about providing both the best learning environment for children and a stimulating work environment for employees.	Early childhood programs are proven to prepare children for school and help them become productive citizens in the future. High- quality early childhood programs are necessary for a strong future workforce.
<ul> <li>State the Problem</li> <li>Clearly and concisely define the problem. Choose the most compelling component of the issue for each audience. Think about:</li> <li>What is the problem?</li> <li>Who is affected by the issue?</li> <li>Why does the issue need to be addressed at this time?</li> <li>Where is the problem the greatest?</li> <li>When is intervention needed before there are negative consequences?</li> <li>How are children, families, and the community being affected?</li> <li>What local data can you provide to emphasize how the problem is affecting the community?</li> </ul>	Our community has grown tremendously in the past several years. We regularly have to turn away many children who could benefit from our program because we don't have enough space for them. There is a vacant building next to our business where we could expand and serve many more families. However, our current funding will not cover renovation costs.	Our community has grown tremendously in the past several years, and more parents are seeking early childhood programs for their children. Perhaps your program has had to turn away children because there is not enough classroom space. Or you may want to expand your facility, but your current funding will not cover the costs.	Our community has grown tremendously in the past several years, and more parents are seeking early childhood programs for their children. But programs regularly have to turn away children because there is not enough classroom space.
Inform Others about Potential Solutions Be prepared to suggest and discuss practical solutions. Consider your specific recommendations, the evidence you have to support them, and how these solutions might be funded.	The capital bill includes funding for early childhood facilities. If the bill is approved, it would allow us to apply for at least a portion of the cost of a renovation project, and would go far in helping us reach our goal of serving many more children in our community.	The state legislation is considering a capital bill that includes funding for early childhood facilities. If the bill is approved, it would allow programs to apply for funding to build or renovate facilities and help them serve many more children in the community.	The state legislation is considering a capital bill that includes funding for early childhood facilities. If the bill is approved, it would allow programs to apply for funding to build or renovate facilities and help them serve many more children in the community.
<b>Call to Action</b> The call to action required will vary according to the audience and the problem at hand, but make sure to clearly define the "ask". The action requested should be specific and give your audience an immediate way to get involved.	Would you support the capital bill that includes early childhood facilities funding? Would you ask your legislative leaders to also support this initiative?	Would you call your legislators and ask them to support the capital bill that includes early childhood facilities funding?	Would you call your legislators and ask them to support the capital bill that includes early childhood facilities funding?

The Ounce Of Prevention Early Childhood Advocacy Toolkit ©2009





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