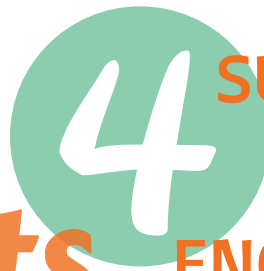


TA Tidbits



SUCCESSFUL TIPS FOR ENGAGING FAMILIES

Engaging families in your early childhood program is a great way to build positive relationships and provide young children with quality early learning experiences. Family participation in preschool based activities and ongoing communication between families and teachers are related to young children's learning (Harvard Family Research Project, 2006).

Families know their children best and can offer good information to support both teaching and learning. Here are 4 successful tips for engaging the families in your program:

1 Involve Families in the decision-making process:

Allowing families to have a voice in their child's early learning can provide new ideas from different perspectives. This can help in meeting the individual needs of children while respecting the family's culture and values.

For family survey tips and sample questions, visit NAEYC's website:

<https://www.naeyc.org/familyengagement/resources/conduting-family-survey>

(Delaware Stars standard FS2).

2 Communicate Daily

Short daily notes that share something special their child did that day allows their family to feel more involved in their child's daily activities and developmental progress.

Sharing something positive with families like 'Jayden was a big help today during the field trip' both provides information and also builds the relationship. Providing daily correspondence helps families feel more involved in their child's program. (Delaware Stars standard FC2).

3 Celebrate Family Heritage

Encouraging families to share their customs and traditions provides opportunities for staff, children and their families to learn about our multicultural society.

Providers that view families as valuable resources promotes an environment of acceptance and compassion among children, their families and staff. Adding questions to your enrollment form that ask about cultures or traditions that families would be willing to share or asking families to submit a favorite recipe for a Program Family Cookbook and then preparing some of the recipes together with the children are ways to incorporate family heritage in your program. These types of program practices also meet various Delaware Stars standards.

4 Host Family Events

Hosting social events for families engages families but also gives the families a chance to get to know one another. This contributes to a sense of a larger "family" that exists within your program. A family picnic, Muffins for Mom, Danishes for Dad, a covered dish where each family brings one of their favorite dishes to share are a few ideas. Make the most of what the families can offer each other. For example, if one of the family members is a police officer ask if they'd be willing to talk about neighborhood safety. Invite a guest speaker to share information on topics such as getting ready for kindergarten or how to deal with children with challenging behavior at home. (Delaware Stars standard FS3).