

The Family Connection

By CEE Staff. Reprinted from CEE, December 2010.

Since parents are a child's primary teacher, schools/programs must respect the critical role parents play in supporting the growth and development of their child.... Effective partnerships with parents are a vital part of quality education. Between staff and parents, a rapport is built that supports communication between the home and the education program.... The staff actively initiates relationships with families, cultivating communication and providing multiple avenues for ongoing parent involvement and feedback. (ACSI 2008, 11)

Emerging Practice

The practice may be inconsistently implemented, but the teacher is committed to learning and growing in this area; program and staff-member practices show awareness but have incomplete policies or expectations.

Consistent Implementation

Program and staff-member practices express care, concern, and understanding of family dynamics and needs.

Exemplary Performance

Program and staff-member practices have been thoughtfully and intentionally determined. Among the staff, there is a culture of accountability for ministry to families and a deep respect for parents and caregivers of enrolled children.

	Emerging Practice	Consistent Implementation	Exemplary Performance
Valuing a Child's Family Culture	Children have a chance to share about their family culture as part of a thematic unit.	Children are consistently viewed in the context of their family's culture. Staff members are sensitive to culture, and they seek out ways to further understand the cultures represented in their classroom.	Cultural awareness permeates the program, from the materials in the learning centers, the snacks provided, and the children's literature selected, to the activities planned. Staff members regularly embrace opportunities to celebrate the beauty and diversity of the humanity created in God's image.
Understanding Changing Family Units	Program practices anecdotally accommodate significant changes in family units. Staff members discuss changes in family structures in order to solve a specific problem.	Program leaders aggressively seek to understand the obvious and subtle changes of the audience they serve and to respond significantly to families' needs. Staff members participate in brainstorming to serve the needs of the families enrolled.	Program leaders invest time to understand, track, solicit feedback from, and become experts on the families they serve. They find ways to accommodate language and economic barriers and cultural differences. Staff members are specifically trained to serve the needs of children and families.

The Family Connection

	Emerging Practice	Consistent Implementation	Exemplary Performance
Inviting Parents and Guardians into Daily Routines	Parents and guardians are warmly greeted in the program. They are welcome and expected guests at special events.	<p>During the enrollment process, parents and guardians receive a list of participation opportunities.</p> <p>Teachers invite parents to and remind them about opportunities and accommodate parental involvement.</p>	<p>Program leaders establish classroom schedules and routines with parent involvement in mind. They match parents' and guardians' interests to participation opportunities and create tailored interactions. The program provides orientation for parental involvement.</p> <p>Parents' ideas are cultivated and implemented (as appropriate) in the classrooms. Parents spontaneously comment that they feel like valued partners in their children's education.</p>
Providing Clear Communication on Children's Progress	Communicating a child's progress is generally confined to brief conversations during drop-off or pickup, which—though warm, friendly, and respectful—tend to focus on health, safety, and behavioral issues. Occasionally, impressions about physical, cognitive, social/emotional, or spiritual development are shared.	<p>Parents are invited to participate in setting goals for their children when they are introduced to a new classroom.</p> <p>Teachers are trained to recognize progress indicators. They collect multiple means of documentation on progress.</p> <p>Personal conferences are scheduled; the child's progress in each developmental domain is discussed.</p>	<p>Staff members receive extensive training on observing and recording children's progress and on conducting parent conferences.</p> <p>Parents receive multiple opportunities to participate in nurturing their child's progress, and their observations are discussed and valued.</p>

Questions

1. Where do you land on this rubric?

