

# ELEMENT 8

## Parent, Family, & Community Partnerships

*A quality program establishes a strong partnership with families and communities in order to achieve program goals.*

### A QUALITY PROGRAM:

1. Communicates with families on matters concerning the well-being and development of the participant.
2. \*Develops, reviews, and updates plan for family involvement.
3. Involves families, the community, and elected officials in program events.
4. Views parents and families as educational partners, and communicates opportunities for literacy and other adult educational workshops to help families support child and youth development outside of the program.
5. Works with families to identify needs, provides families with information about community resources to meet their needs, and makes referrals as necessary.
6. Builds relationships with arts, cultural, and other community institutions to expand and enhance program offerings.
7. Has a parent information area in the program space that is well organized and easy to locate.
8. Involves families in advocacy efforts.
9. Provides a range of opportunities in which participants' work and/or skills can be showcased to peers, families, and community.

PERFORMANCE LEVEL				PLAN TO IMPROVE		
1	2	3	4	RIGHT NOW	THIS YEAR	NEXT YEAR

NOTES:

# Parent, Family, & Community Partnerships

A quality program establishes a strong partnership with families and communities in order to achieve program goals.

A quality program understands that families and communities play an important role in supporting and fostering the healthy development of participants. Creating effective collaborations with families and communities is approached with the understanding that they are assets and partners in the program's learning environment. Creating partnerships with families and the surrounding community is an ongoing and multi-faceted effort. Specific steps are taken to ensure that information and programs are offered in multiple languages and formats.

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## Parent, Family, & Community Partnerships, Indicator 1

Communicates with families on matters concerning the well-being and development of the participant.

### Performance Level 1

No formal system is in place to communicate with families, and communication with families is rare. Families are contacted when problems occur and in cases of emergency.

### Performance Level 2

Communication with families occurs occasionally at events such as family orientation sessions and year-end events. Families are also contacted when problems occur and in cases of emergency.

### Performance Level 3

Communication with families occurs frequently throughout the year, both at events and one-on-one whenever possible. Communication focuses on the participant's strengths and growth, as well as challenges. Families are also contacted in cases of emergency and when there are behavioral, social, emotional, or academic matters to discuss. Written communication, such as newsletters and websites, also provide important information about the accomplishments of participants in the program.

### Performance Level 4

Communication with families occurs frequently and regularly throughout the year; at events, one-on-one, and via e-mail and phone calls. Each family is contacted at least once a year for an update on their child's development and experience in the program. Communication focuses on the participant's strengths, growth, and challenges. Staff members make it known that they care about the participant and want to work together with the family towards the participant's success. Families are also contacted in cases of emergency and when there are behavioral, social, emotional, or academic matters to discuss. Staff members encourage families to contact them whenever they have a question, suggestion, or concern about their child. Newsletters and websites share timely information about upcoming events, and feature participant accomplishments and performances.

## Parent, Family, & Community Partnerships, Indicator 2

\*Develops, reviews, and updates plan for family involvement.

### Performance Level 1

No plan for family involvement exists. Therefore, family involvement occurs occasionally but is not a deliberate aspect of the program's design.

**Performance Level 2**

A plan for family involvement was created by the site director. The plan provides a few opportunities for families to participate, such as attending a program orientation. The plan has not been updated since the program began. Staff members are asked to implement the plan whenever possible.

**Performance Level 3**

A plan for family involvement was created by the site director, staff members, and family members of participants. The plan includes several types of opportunities for families to participate, such as attending a program orientation, facilitating activities, assisting with fundraising, and participating in continuous improvement efforts, such as regular self-assessment. The plan has been updated a few times since the program began to respond to community needs. Staff members are asked to implement the plan consistently throughout the program year.

**Performance Level 4**

A comprehensive plan for family involvement is created by the site director, other staff members, and family members. The plan includes several types of opportunities for families to participate, such as attending a program orientation, facilitating activities, assisting with fundraising, and participating in continuous improvement efforts, such as regular self-assessment. The plan is regularly updated to respond to community needs and to incorporate feedback from families. Staff members are trained during orientation on the importance of implementing the family involvement plan.

**Parent, Family, & Community Partnerships, Indicator 3**

Involves families, the community, and elected officials in program events.

**Performance Level 1**

No formal system is in place to communicate with families, the community, and elected officials. Families and the community are unaware of many program events, are not explicitly invited, or feel that program events are only for participants. Families and the community rarely participate in program events, and/or the few participating families are the same ones.

**Performance Level 2**

Families, the community, and elected officials are sometimes invited to program events, such as when there is space available for them. Therefore, families, the community, and elected officials participate in events occasionally, but not on a regular basis.

**Performance Level 3**

Families, the community, and elected officials are generally invited to program events and regularly participate. The site director advertises events several weeks prior to the event date, and staff members encourage families, community members, and elected officials to attend. Events are planned for times that accommodate families' schedules, such as evening and weekend hours.

**Performance Level 4**

Families, the community sectors, and elected officials are always invited to program events and regularly participate. The site director advertises events several weeks prior to the event date, and staff members and participants encourage families, community members, and elected officials to attend. Each participant is given event invitations to deliver to their family members, and event invitations are created in multiple languages, if necessary. Events are posted in local newspaper, community bulletins, and sent out to the community via e-mail. Events are planned for times that accommodate families' schedules, such as evening and weekend hours, and are offered on different days of the week in order to accommodate various families.

## Parent, Family, & Community Partnerships, Indicator 4

Views parents and families as educational partners, and communicates opportunities for literacy and other adult educational workshops to help families support child and youth development outside of the program.

### Performance Level 1

No formal system is established to connect families to opportunities for literacy and related educational experiences in the community.

### Performance Level 2

The program offers limited family literacy or related educational opportunity during the course of the program year. The need for additional adult education is recognized. A family bulletin is created to keep families informed of program events and schedules in the community, but it is not updated with current information.

### Performance Level 3

A series of family literacy and related educational workshops is launched. Families receive strategies and resources for creating a rich learning environment at home. A peer network and book-lending library are established as a result of the interactions in the family space. Families often inquire about how to navigate the school system, assist with their child's learning, advocate for their child, and support program goals. A family bulletin is created and updated regularly to keep families informed of program events and schedules in the community.

### Performance Level 4

Families are seen as assets and treated as critical learning partners. Family literacy and related educational workshop series are developed and offered based on family input and a community needs assessment. A peer network and book-lending library are established and families are consistently asked for resource suggestions and reminded to utilize the program's resources. The program partners with a local college to increase families' access to course information. A family newsletter containing family literacy information, resources, program offerings, and community opportunities is distributed on a monthly basis. All publications are provided in English and other languages commonly spoken in the community.

## Parent, Family, & Community Partnerships, Indicator 5

Works with families to identify needs, provides families with information about community resources to meet their needs, and makes referrals as necessary.

### Performance Level 1

No formal system is established to communicate with families about community resources. Staff members are not knowledgeable about the available resources to families in the community. Families sometimes learn of community resources by asking staff members for advice. Staff members may or may not have information.

### Performance Level 2

The program becomes aware of and staff members provide families with some information about community resources to help meet perceived needs. The program maintains information on a few of community-based organizations and local resources, and family members can request this information from staff members.

### Performance Level 3

The program works with families to identify needs, formally or informally. Staff members regularly provide families with information about community resources regarding general areas of interest, as well as those identified through family and participant needs assessments. The program maintains information on many community-based organizations and local resources. The information is posted at the program site for families to view, and families can also request additional information from site director. Families receive updated information on a regular basis. Information is regularly updated to include upcoming events, new services, and community news.

**Performance Level 4**

The program works with families to identify needs in a formal way (e.g. surveys, focus groups, assessment tools, etc.). The program regularly provides families with information about community resources regarding general areas of interest, as well as those identified through family and participant needs assessments. The program maintains and updates information on many community-based organizations and local resources. The information is posted at the program site for families to view, brochures are sent to participants' homes, families can request additional information from staff members, and community resource representatives are invited to share their services and resources with families one or more times per year at events or family educational workshops. One or more staff members are kept up-to-date and trained to refer families to specific types of services and resources based on their needs. Family representatives are provided with training on a regular basis and updated on local resources. They use this information to provide outreach and assistance to other families involved with the program.

**Parent, Family, & Community Partnerships, Indicator 6**

Builds relationships with arts, cultural, and other community institutions to expand and enhance program offerings.

**Performance Level 1**

No formal system is established to build relationships with arts, cultural, and other community institutions to expand and enhance program offerings. The program offers some site-based arts and cultural programs.

**Performance Level 2**

The program is aware of arts, cultural, and community institutions offering programming and occasionally takes advantage of a community-based opportunity to expand upon on-site programming.

**Performance Level 3**

The program has built relationships with several arts, cultural, and community institutions and programs, and regularly expands and enhances on-site programming with related community opportunities. These opportunities provide participants with new experiences and learning opportunities.

**Performance Level 4**

The program has built strong partnerships and regularly collaborates with arts, cultural, and community institutions and programs. Staff members and community institution staff work together to develop and enhance programming for participants and their families. Expanded on-site and off-site opportunities are provided. Families, participants, and staff are regularly surveyed to assist with program design and activities. Arts and cultural programs educate and promote the strengths of the population being served, as well as educate on the strengths and contributions of other populations. Programs are offered in the languages of program participants with translation offered as needed.

**Parent, Family, & Community Partnerships, Indicator 7**

Has a parent information area in the program space that is well organized and easy to locate.

**Performance Level 1**

No parent information area is present, or it is not up to date.

**Performance Level 2**

There is an area for parent information, but it is cluttered, missing relevant information, or difficult to use.

**Performance Level 3**

The parent area is well defined and easy to identify when entering the program. All information is attractively displayed, and includes a program calendar, lesson plans for the week, parent orientation materials, contact information for organization leadership, program policy/parent handbook, and relevant community resources.

**Performance Level 4**

The parent area is easy to locate upon entering program. Area includes program information (calendars, plans, contact information) and resources (e.g., on youth development, job training, assistance, and community events not directly related to the program). Materials and resources are attractively displayed and easy to reach/access. Print is large and easy to read. Languages used in the parent information area match all the languages spoken by families in the program. A space for parents to access and utilize computers also exists.

**Parent, Family, & Community Partnerships, Indicator 8**

Involves families in advocacy efforts.

**Performance Level 1**

Parents are not invited to participate in advocacy efforts, or program does not participate in advocacy efforts.

**Performance Level 2**

Parents are invited to participate in advocacy, but times of events are inconvenient or materials are unclear, so parents can't participate. Some parents are involved but other parents are excluded (intentionally or unintentionally).

**Performance Level 3**

Invites families to join legislative events, including call-in campaigns and awareness events, such as Lights On Afterschool. Informs families of opportunities to communicate the importance of the program to other stakeholders. Parents and family members participate in advocacy efforts when invited to by staff.

**Performance Level 4**

Families are represented on advisory groups for the program. The program participates in local, state, and federal advocacy events, with families representing the program. Parents and families participate in calling, letter writing, and petition signing on behalf of the program and the field. Parents attend visits with elected officials and advocate directly on behalf of the program. Parents and families are involved in contacting the media for advocacy, including broadcast, print, and online. Family members lead and coordinate advocacy efforts for the program.

**Parent, Family, & Community Partnerships, Indicator 9**

Provides a range of opportunities in which participants' work and/or skills can be showcased to peers, families, and community.

**Performance Level 1**

The program provides no opportunities for participants to showcase work at the program, or through program events.

**Performance Level 2**

Participants' work is showcased irregularly at the program site. Participants can bring their projects to a staff member to have it placed on display. Depending on the staff members and activities being offered, occasional performances are held.



**Performance Level 3**

Participants' work is showcased regularly at the program site throughout the year. Every participant who completes a project is encouraged to leave it at the site on display before bringing it home. The program has dedicated display space or utilizes temporary displays (e.g. trifold boards, clothesline displays, etc.) that can be set up daily during program hours. Staff members organize performances in which participants can dance, sing, or showcase another talent. Families are invited to watch these performances.

**Performance Level 4**

Participants' work is showcased regularly at the program site throughout the year. Every participant is encouraged to complete a project that can be displayed on site; every participant has their work on display year-round. Staff members organize performances in which every participant contributes. Participants have the option to dance, sing, showcase another talent, or work "behind the scenes." Families and other community members are invited to watch these performances.

