



Series #3: Caregiver Support

Tips for Tots



Tip #1: Creating Partnerships with Families

Strategies

Did you know?

A strong relationship between a child’s parents and his/her caregiver or teacher can help a child succeed. Building the relationship between the caregiver and the parents can be a challenge in today’s world given the many things parents and caregivers juggle in their day, such as job responsibilities, long hours, and other commitments. Partnering with parents can keep them informed of how their child is doing in the program as well as help parents to communicate and inform caregivers of events and issues in the child’s life. Sharing the child’s daily successes and struggles is the foundation of the parent-caregiver partnership. This foundation enables the caregiver to easily approach a parent and problem solve about an issue their child may be having. It is also reassuring for children to see that the most important people in their lives care for them and work as a team. Today there is more opportunity for communication than ever before: phone calls, text messaging, emails, daily notes, newsletters, meetings, etc. Caregivers can consider many options in communicating and partnering with the parents of the children in their care. While the fast paced world we live in can be quite challenging, creating effective partnerships with parents can provide the needed support for the child, parent, and caregiver.

- Use different ways to communicate with parents about their child. Offer options parents can choose from. These can include: Use a notebook where parents and teachers can share information about a child’s day; Encourage parents to stay and visit at drop-off or pick-up times; Arrange a phone call for a time of day that will work best for the parent and caregiver; Hold a meeting to fully discuss achievements, goals, concerns, etc.
- Create a questionnaire for parents to complete about their child’s strengths, interests, activities, fears, challenging behaviors, and ways that their child can be comforted. Update the questionnaire at least each year and share it with every teacher or caregiver that works with the child.
- Make an unexpected phone call or send an e-mail to a parent to let them know their child is having a great day or to share a brief story about something kind, helpful, or funny their child did or said.
- Learn about each family, including their culture, interests or jobs of each parent.
- Encourage caregivers to offer home visits to families. It allows the caregiver to learn about the family, child’s experiences, home environment, neighborhood, and to ask questions about how they can best support the child.
- Provide a variety of ways that parents can become involved such as: volunteering in the classroom, helping with a fundraiser, reading a story to or teaching their child’s class about a favorite hobby.
- Create a Give-and-Take bulletin board at school where the teacher/caregiver and parent have opportunities to share information/resources, fun activities or program announcements. Consider having different topics each month such as: Spotlight on a Family, Parenting Book of the Month, and other selected topics of the month.
- Provide parents with opportunities to give feedback. Ex. Suggestion boxes or parent advisory committees.

Resources:

<http://www.pbs.org/parents/education/going-to-school/parent-involvement/parent-teacher-partnership>
<http://education.washington.edu/areas/edlps/profiles/faculty/ginsberg/parents.pdf>

Contact your area ECCP Consultant for **free** Early Childhood Mental Health Consultation services.

To learn of the consultant in your area please visit ECCP at www.eccpct.com or call ECCP at (860) 704-6378

Brought to you by ECCP

Early Childhood Consultation Partnership®

A program of Advanced Behavioral Health
www.abhct.com

Funded by CT Department of Children & Families



Advanced Behavioral Health, Inc.