

Barrier Assessment Checklist

Purpose

This tool is intended to offer a comprehensive look at the potential barriers that exist for family leaders and families to meaningfully engage as partners at decision-making tables.

How to Use This Tool

This checklist will help to assess the readiness of your organization for meaningful parent engagement and help to level the playing field for all participants. This tool is not intended to be used directly with family leaders, but rather as a guiding document for your group leaders and others interested in grounding authentic parent engagement in their practice.

Organizational

- Have you co-created group agreements?
 - Do you revisit the group norms at the start of each meeting?
 - Have you engaged all table participants in continued updates to the group agreements?

- Have you polled the complete membership on meeting times, with particular attention to the parent leaders?
 - Did you follow up to maximize participation?
 - Did you specifically reach out to family leaders to ensure that they are comfortable with the meeting times and can attend the meeting?

- Do you have a strategy to support your family leaders?
 - Do you have a mentor working alongside each family leader?
 - Are you providing time/space for regular check-ins?



- Is this support an explicit part of the work plan?
 - Have you supported family leaders to understand what to expect at the meeting, how the meeting will run and anticipated outcomes of the meeting?
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- Do you have an explicit protocol for addressing unique situations (ie COVID)?
 - Will your family leaders have a clear understanding of how meetings will be run and what options they have for attendance?
 - Do you have options for participation if folks are quarantined or supporting those who are quarantined?
 - Have these been co-created with and communicated to the family leaders?
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Family Leaders

- Are you paying stipends and/or offering other incentives (gas cards, gift cards) to family leaders for their participation?
 - Are you providing the stipend/incentive ahead of time or in intervals?
 - Is the stipend/incentive provided directly related to family leaders attending meetings?
 - Is the stipend/incentive provided in a timely fashion?
 - Have you minimized administrative burdens to receiving stipend/incentive?
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- Have you asked the family leaders directly about what their challenges are to access/participation?
 - Did you allow opportunity for family leaders to respond in a safe space?
 - Do you allow multiple ways to respond (one-to-one, written submission, etc.)?
 - In your 1:1 are you looking for barriers?
 - Are you aware of the potential need for confidentiality?
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- Do your family leaders have a first language other than English?
 - Have you inquired about anyone needing access to materials in a language other than English?
 - Have you considered offering live translation at meetings?
 - If virtual meetings, are you allowing for captioning?
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- Is your meeting location accessible?
 - Can you accommodate individuals who might have unique mobility needs?
 - Are the family leaders traveling a large distance to the meetings?
 - Is the location accessible by multiple modes of transportation?
 - Are you offering a remote option for families?
 - Have you asked family leaders explicitly about what their technology needs are?
 - Have you considered access to broadband internet services that might prohibit remote access?
 - Do you have a mitigation strategy for family leaders who do not have reliable internet access?
 - Do you have a strategy to support family leaders who do not have a high level of confidence in their ability to use the technology effectively?
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- Is this a space where everyone will feel comfortable?
 - Have you considered if this space will be a trigger for families based on prior negative experiences? For some families, Department of Social Services buildings create concern.
 - Is this a space that welcomes all people?
 - Have you researched the space to ensure that there is not a negative relationship with communities of color?
 - Is the space located in or near a facility that might be concerning to people with limited immigration status, such as immigrant detention facility, ICE office, or law enforcement facility?
 - Have you considered spaces where families might already feel comfortable or have a prior positive relationship?
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- Who is providing care for their children?
 - Are you providing child care for the family leaders?
 - Are you allowing children to attend the meetings?
 - Do you offer remote access to meetings?
 - Are you accepting of the presence of families?
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- Are you ensuring equal voice at the table?
 - Do you have a protocol to ensure wider participation of voices?
 - Do the professional staff allow space for communication?
 - Are you providing materials ahead of time for folks to process?
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- Have you considered the inherent trauma that can come from sharing your story?
 - Do you have a strategy to support family leaders who are feeling trauma?
 - Are you offering family leaders multiple ways to share their experiences with the group?
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