

FAMILIES ARE THE KEY TO FAMILY ENGAGEMENT



WHAT IS FAMILY ENGAGEMENT?

Family engagement is an intentional, authentic, respectful, and equal partnership between practitioners and families leading to positive results for children and youth.

For families this means:

- strong two-way communication in their preferred language, with help of a cultural broker or a family liaison if needed,
- information shared in a way that is clear and easy to understand,
- recognition of and respect for their abilities, strengths, traditions, and values,
- active and equal participation in making decisions about their child/youth.

Families' active role is important and necessary for a successful partnership.

WHY BE ENGAGED?

- Family engagement is crucial for healthy development of children and youth.
- Families, who are active and respected participants in child/youth development and learning, can help practitioners see new ways to build safe, welcoming, and trusting environments.
- Access to information about their children/youth's learning and development affects family members' knowledge, confidence, and advocacy skills.

WHAT SHOULD FAMILIES EXPECT FROM PRACTITIONERS?



Practitioners in this document refers to professionals/providers in variety of fields such as health, libraries, museums, early education and care programs, home visitors, human services, school and district administrators, public health, higher education faculty, and cultural, faith-based, and other community-based organizations.



Building Positive Relationships



Positive relationships are based on shared trust, respect, and understanding.

In a strong relationship with practitioners, families should expect ...

- welcoming, collaborative, and safe environments.
- respect for their cultural, religious, and traditional beliefs and customs.
- opportunities to communicate their own perspectives, experiences, and dreams.
- opportunities to share their ideas of child/youth development, learning, health, and well-being.
- support to build and strengthen partnerships with other families.

Promoting Pathways for Partnerships with Families



Each family determines level of engagement with which it is most comfortable.

In a strong relationship with practitioners, families should expect ...

- opportunities to educate practitioners about themselves, their cultures, values, goals and needs.
- participation in family support programs to develop/strengthen skills.
- opportunities to lead community activities.

Promoting Family Well-Being

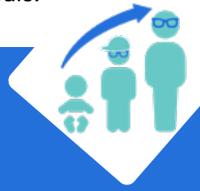


Families have their own goals such as family members' health, mental health, educational advancement, economic mobility, and other aspects of well-being.

In a strong relationship with practitioners, families should expect ...

- to bring their own definition of a community.
- referral to the appropriate community partners.
- opportunities for community engagement.
- culturally and linguistically responsive services and resources to achieve their goals.

Supporting Child & Youth Development, Learning, Health, and Well-being



Positive outcomes for children and youth is the highest goal for all families.

In a strong relationship with practitioners, families should expect ...

- resources and materials in their preferred languages.
- opportunities to participate in workshops, support groups, and child/youth screenings in their primary languages.
- to voice the barriers or challenges they face while participating in engagement opportunities and work collaboratively with practitioners to overcome these barriers.



For more information on the Massachusetts Statewide Family Engagement Framework, please visit www.doe.mass.edu/sfs/family-engagement-framework.pdf.
For a complementary summary for practitioners, please visit www.doe.mass.edu/sfs/family-engagement-framework-professional-tool.pdf

