

2. Family & Community Engagement

2A.

FAMILY & COMMUNITY
ENGAGEMENT

STANDARDS

The ECE program leadership promotes and implements system-wide family engagement policies and a family-friendly environment.

EVIDENCE

Self-Study and Program Portfolio demonstrate:

Program has a written family engagement policy that clearly articulates the importance of families in the program and in the lives of their children.

AND

Program environment makes all families and family members feel welcome and program staff demonstrates a commitment to serving families as well as children in the program.

AND

Program facilitates the development of family-to-family social networks and supports.

AND

Program has recruitment and hiring policy that seeks to hire and/or train staff that reflects the cultural/ethnic background of children/families served.

AND

Program hires staff willing to pursue ongoing professional development around working with families.

AND

Program offers support and supervision to all staff around implementing family and community engagement policies. Staff is supported in their family engagement efforts through regular opportunities to reflect and communicate with supervisors, management and program leadership through team and individual meetings.

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The ECE program uses a relationship-based approach to engaging families and all staff members demonstrate respect for families' culture, language, family composition, and circumstances.

EVIDENCE

Self-Study and Program Portfolio demonstrate:

Program has an understanding of the diverse backgrounds of families in the program, including culture, language, ability, family composition, and circumstances, and use this knowledge in their interactions with families. Program staff members actively work with families to bring their strengths and resources to the program and approaches families as assets to the program.

AND

Program staff recognize the important role that fathers play in the lives of their children and make intentional efforts to include and welcome fathers in all aspects of the program.

AND

Communication with families is reciprocal, collaborative, positive, transparent and responsive to families' goals, interests, needs, expectations, and language preferences.

AND

Program staff members consistently minimize power differentials in all interactions with family members.

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The ECE program uses a goal-oriented approach to working with families through creating opportunities for collaborative decision-making about goals for their children, their families, and the program.

EVIDENCE

Self-Study and Program Portfolio demonstrate:

Program builds working partnerships between families and staff on behalf of children and seeks regular input from families about their children's growth and development.

AND

Program staff members work with families to enhance their capacity and confidence to support their children's learning.

AND

Program creates frequent and ongoing opportunities for family members to participate in and share leadership responsibilities and decision-making around program operations and prepares families for these roles.

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The ECE program initiates and promotes broad and active community partnerships on behalf of families, children, staff and community.

EVIDENCE

Self-Study and Program Portfolio demonstrate:

Program has active and ongoing collaborations with community organizations and services.

AND

Lists of program and community resources and services for families are updated on a regular basis to respond to families' home cultures, interests, needs, and language of choice.

AND

Program advocates on behalf of families by facilitating their ease of access to community resources as well as creating opportunities for families to advocate for themselves, their children, and their community in regards to needed resources and services.

AND

Program works with eligible families, both current and prospective, to seek and access child care assistance and other financial supports if needed.

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The ECE program has systems for collecting and using data related to family and community engagement for the purpose of improving program practices. The ECE program collects and shares relevant data with families.

EVIDENCE

Self-Study and Program Portfolio demonstrate:

Program has systems in place for collecting data on family and community partnerships in collaboration with families, including data on families' knowledge about their child's emotional and developmental growth, families' experiences in the program, staff experiences with families, and staff/family/community experiences with community partnerships.

AND

A variety of data collection methods are used and are accessible to all family members. If surveys are used, they are available in families' preferred language.

AND

Data collection systems follow strict confidentiality guidelines that are articulated in a data-sharing agreement policy.

AND

Program has systems in place for sharing data with families in ways they can understand.

AND

Program uses knowledge gathered from data collection efforts to inform ongoing program improvement and program staff members demonstrate a willingness to change practices and policies based on data about program quality and family experiences in the program.

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ECE program staff has knowledge and training in how to build strong family-program relationships. ECE program staff also has knowledge about the strengths, needs, and experiences of individual families as they relate to child and family well-being.

EVIDENCE

Self-Study and Program Portfolio demonstrate:

Program encourages and provides opportunities for staff members to learn new information about family and community engagement and participate in professional development opportunities.

AND

All staff members have ongoing training in working with diverse families and have knowledge about family systems and dynamics and the cultural and economic factors that shape families' lives.

AND

Program provides opportunities for staff members to engage in training on adult learning styles and relationship-based approaches to working with adults. Such trainings should include (but are not limited to) communication strategies, reflective listening and reflective practice, adult learning styles, perspective-taking, developing partnerships, conflict resolution, team building, and cultural competency and responsiveness.

2. Family & Community Engagement

2B.

TRANSITIONS

STANDARDS

The ECE program facilitates healthy transitions and adjustments for children and families. Smooth transitions for children and families are facilitated for children changing caregivers within an ECE setting, moving from one ECE setting to another, or from one ECE setting to elementary school (e.g. Early Head Start to Head Start, Child Care/HS/pre-K to public school) whether these are on a regular basis or a one-time transition. The ECE program helps children and families develop skills around managing these transitions.

EVIDENCE

Self-Study and Program Portfolio demonstrate:

Program staff members help families and children make the adjustment from home to the program and from the program to home in ways that foster children's healthy attachments and development and in ways that are responsive to family needs and preferences.

AND

Program has a written continuity of care plan that is developed with families for children who make regular or one-time transitions between classrooms and/or caregivers within the program.

AND

Program helps families who use multiple ECE and child care arrangements to develop transition plans for their children and themselves.

AND

Program helps families secure other ECE arrangements if needed.

AND

Program enhances school readiness for children by helping families develop a transition plan for their children and themselves in preparation for the entry into elementary school.