







Learning Objectives

-  Participants apply child development theory and current research on family-school partnerships to their early childhood programs.
-  Participants plan environments and experiences that strengthen the parent-provider partnership.
-  Participants articulate their own protective urges that arise when working with young children.
-  Participants describe the critical components of a healthy parent-caregiver relationship.
-  Participants demonstrate competence in active listening skills.
-  Participants apply conflict resolution skills.
-  Participants create opportunities for appropriate parent-involvement in their program.

Activities for Inclusion

Involving parents early in their child's education lays the groundwork for future partnerships. It is important to develop ways to include families that respond to diverse interests and life circumstances. Giving parents an option of helping in program or at home, allows families to participate where they feel most comfortable.

Involving Families Inside of Program

Invite parents to:

- share a hobby, talent or occupation
- read a special story at circle time
- attend field trips
- help in cooking activities or art projects
- bring in a family pet
- share a cultural tradition

Involving Families Outside of Program

Ask parents to:

- create homemade toys
- read and tape-record stories or music
- sew costumes
- make curtains
- prep exploration kits
- bake seasonal goods
- build play furniture or structures
- donate real objects for play (for example, telephone or binoculars)



Preparing for Family Involvement

As we prepare for family involvement we must consider the following:

- what specific duties will parents do
- what program philosophies should they be aware of
- what modeling/support will they need

The Continuum of Parent and Provider Involvement

The continuum of parent-provider partnerships

- **High involvement** – parents and provider have regular meetings to review child’s development; decisions that affect the child are made as a team; parents may contribute ideas and items to program; families plan social events together; parents feel welcome in the program at any time.

Parent role: Active

- **Average involvement** – parents are invited to celebrations at family child care home; provider updates parents through newsletters or written notes; provider and parent meet occasionally to review child’s progress.

Parent role: Passive

- **Low involvement** – parents and providers speak briefly at the beginning and end of the day; long discussions are limited to problems.

Parent role: Low

- **No involvement** – parents rarely get past the front door of the family child care home.

Parent role: Non-existent

