Family Engagement

Families are an essential stakeholder in building the behavioral, academic, and social-emotional capacities of school-aged youth. Including families in school-wide decision making across the tiers, with a strengths-based and multi-directional communication approach, is a necessary step for schools. For the purpose of this resource guide, family engagement is defined as: an active, interactive, dynamic and ongoing process in which family members and key stakeholders engage as equal partners in decision-making, planning, and implementation to support children and adolescents across settings (Sheridan et al., 2011; Weist et al., 2017.)

Included in this guide are questions for schools to consider when addressing family/community engagement, strategies to use across community and school, and professional development resources.

**Five principles of family engagement, outlined by Dr. Steve Constantino:**

- Culture that engages every family
- Communicate effectively and build relationships
- Empower every family
- Family participation in decision making
- Engage the greater community

**Questions to Consider for Virtual and In-Person Settings:**

1. Do we approach families with an understanding and expectation that there are shared responsibilities for learning? How can that be achieved?
2. Is a strengths-based approach used within your school when working with families?
3. What do you have in place to create an atmosphere that is family-friendly, warm, and inviting?
4. Are families involved with the action planning process as it relates to engagement and climate?

**Resources**

- Teaching Positive Behavior at Home
- Acknowledging at Home
- Supporting Family with PBIS at Home
- Helping Children Cope with Stress During Covid
- The Power of a Positive Phone Call Home
- Practical Tips for Parents of Young Children with Challenging Behavior
- 11 Tips to Engage with Families
- Using Praise to Encourage Appropriate Behaviors at Home
- Web Series on Family Engagement
- Family Behavior 101 Presentation: PBIS Compendium
- Aligning and Integrating Family Engagement in Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports
- Partners in Education: A Dual Capacity-Building Framework for Family-School Partnerships
- Center for Evidence-Based Practice: Young Children with Challenging Behavior
- National Technical Assistance Center on Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports
- CASEL: SEL in Homes and Communities