Overview

*Working Effectively with Parents* is designed for use by preschool educators and paraprofessionals. It serves to:

- Strengthen the partnership between the preschool service providers and the parents of preschool migratory children they serve.
- Supplement existing preschool program staff development plans.

Each segment may be used independently. The parent activities may be added to a variety of parent event settings.

Preparation

- Read through the entire document first ensuring you understand the topics, layout and activities.
- Determine whether you will present the module in conjunction with a larger staff professional learning event or as a stand-alone training.
- Plan approximately 30-45 minutes to review and discuss the information and carry out the activities.
- Gather materials needed to carry out activities with participants: Copies of "Working Effectively with Parents", sticky notes, pens, and markers.

### ACTIVITIES

#### Parent Engagement Activity

Discuss the *Parent Engagement Activity* section (pg. 2) with service providers. Some suggested activities include:

- Prompt service providers to give examples of parent roles in the American school system. Discuss how parent roles may differ across cultures.
- Ask the service providers to brainstorm how parents can help their children with concepts like colors, numbers, and patterns during the course of everyday activities.

#### Success Story-Comienza en Casa

Read through the description of *Comienza en Casa* with staff (pg. 3). Afterwards, ask staff to reflect on the approach

- What are the benefits of each of the carefully selected components (Read, Play, Create, Offscreen, Family Focus)?
- Describe the many ways parents are engaged through Comienza en Casa.
- What resources and training would you need in order to implement a similar approach?

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ACTIVITIES

What is Family Engagement

Review the *What is Family Engagement* staff development activity section (pg. 4). Conduct the suggested activities with staff. Additional activities include:

- Ask staff to reflect on a very successful family engagement event. What made it successful?
- Prompt staff to extend their understanding of family engagement by reading/researching how to engage families outside the school building (work of Gerardo R. Lopez) and/or how to use the wealth of knowledge families have when designing activities (Funds of knowledge-Moll)

Parent Engagement Activity

Read the section called *Parent Engagement Activity* (pg. 4) with staff.

- Direct staff to work in pairs or small groups to come up with a list of when parents might be able to engage in rich conversation with children throughout the day and throughout the course of their normal routines.
- Ask staff to share resources (games, apps, etc.) that help children develop language

Principles of Family Engagement

Briefly review the graphic called *Principles of Family Engagement* (pg. 4). Ask staff to work with a partner to provide an example of each. Have the pairs compare their examples.

Tips

Direct staff to read the *TIPS* (pg. 5). Afterwards, ask them to add a tip of their own and share with the group

Frequently Asked Questions

Q How can we improve parent engagement with parents who do not attend school meetings and events?

A Think “outside the school building.” Consider how families support their child’s learning and development within the home and community. Look at some of the work by researcher Gerardo R. Lopez.

Q How do we get parents to take a more active role in their child’s school readiness preparation if the parents have limited reading/writing skills?

A Ensure parents get the information, resources, and mentoring needed in order to assist their children and assure them there is much they can do whether or not they can read and/or write.

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