

Father Engagement in Head Start: Is Everybody's Business

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THE NATIONAL CENTER ON
Parent, Family, and
Community Engagement

Objectives

- To reflect on where we are, and where we hope to go in our partnership work with fathers.
- To renew enthusiasm and commitment!
- To identify ways to build father engagement that is systemic, integrated, comprehensive and sustainable.
- To share new resources for improve program practice.



POLLING QUESTIONS



ROLE



GENDER



STAFF



Reflecting on Fatherhood in HS/EHS

- Awareness - Involving
- Acknowledging – Designing Services
- Expectations – Relationships and full engagement



One Way and Two Way Interactions

Parent Involvement

- A one way behavior: parents come to the center
- Or parents let the home visitor in



Family Engagement

- A two way interaction: parents and staff come toward each other
- Parents and staff are both changed, both change each other through this interaction



Moving from Involvement To Engagement

- Moving beyond Status Quo
 - Breakfasts, Dinners, Picnics' versus celebrations tied to family outcomes and child development
- Systemic, Integrated, Comprehensive
 - Pick Up/Drop Off
 - During Home Visits/Socializations
 - Parent Teacher Conferences
 - Program Meetings/Policy Council



Barriers to Involvement and Engagement are Different

Examples of Barriers to Involvement

- Transportation
- Child care
- Work obligations
- Scheduling conflicts
- Bad weather

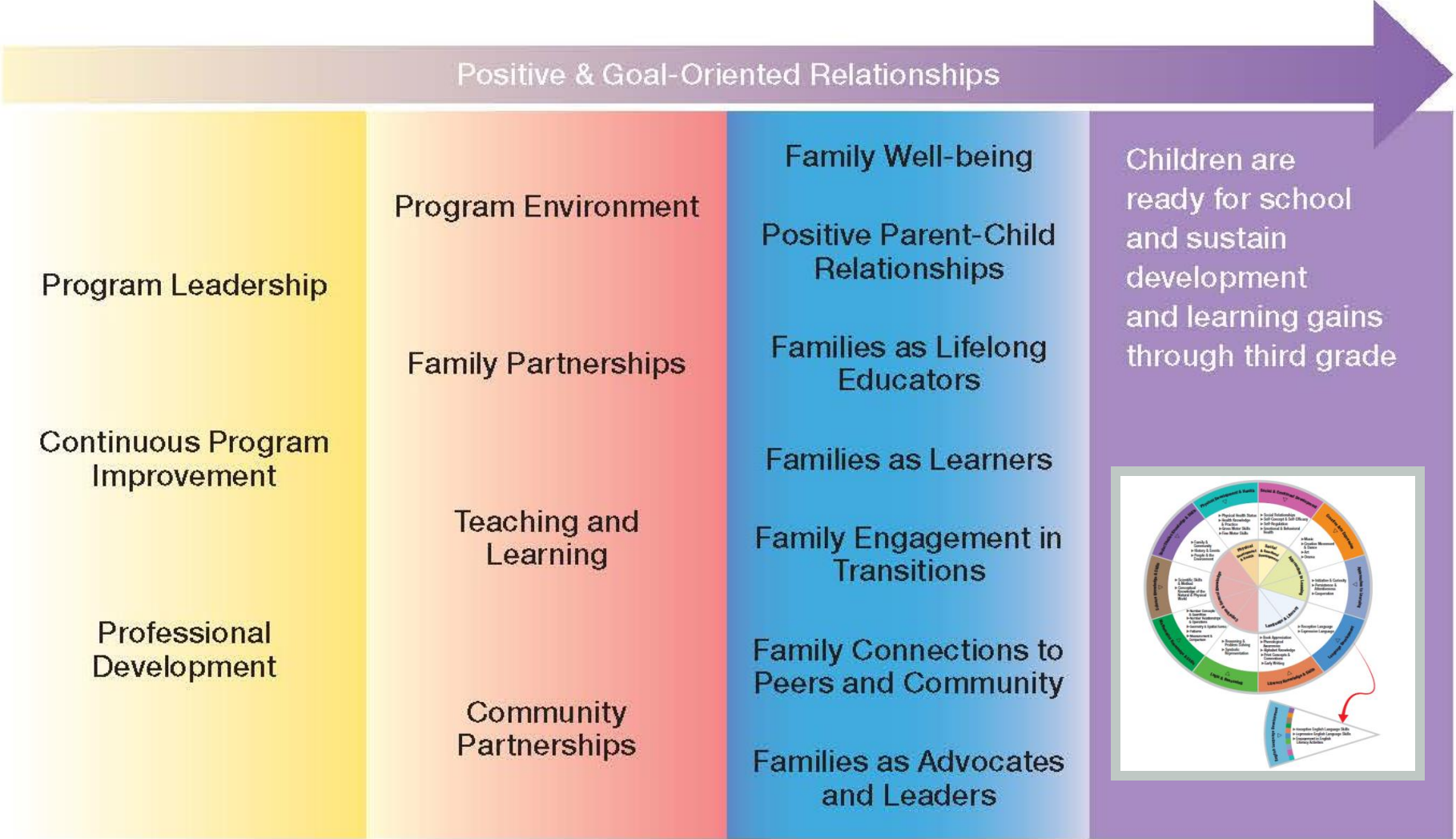


Examples of Barriers to Engagement

- Rigid Gender Roles
- Fear, Distrust
- Feelings of being unwelcome, disrespected
- Pride or false sense of pride
- Misunderstandings
- Power imbalances
- Different beliefs about parent and teacher roles

PARENT, FAMILY, AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT FRAMEWORK

When parent and family engagement activities are systemic and integrated across program foundations and program impact areas, family engagement outcomes are achieved, resulting in children who are healthy and ready for school. Parent and family engagement activities are grounded in positive, ongoing, and goal-oriented relationships with families.



PROGRAM FOUNDATIONS

PROGRAM IMPACT AREAS

FAMILY ENGAGEMENT OUTCOMES

CHILD OUTCOMES

Father's Matter: What the Research Says

- Early father involvement predicts continued involvement. Brazelton.
- Men are fully capable of nurturing young children. Pruett (1997)
- Fathers become attached to their infants. Lamb (2004)





Henderson, North Carolina, 1989

What Do You See?

Expanding Father's Roles

Advocate

Caregiver

Educator

Nurturer

Provider

Friend/Play Mate

Spiritual Advisor

Protector



Program Foundations

Program Leadership

**Continuous Program
Improvement**

**Professional
Development**

**PROGRAM
FOUNDATIONS**

Program Leadership,
Management, Policy
Council and Fathers
working together

How do you know if what
you're doing with and for
fathers is effective for
fathers, families, children?

Professional Development Staff Considerations When Talking with Fathers

- Child Focused
- Very Specific
- Self-Aware
- Boundaries/Optimal Distance



What does it mean to connect with fathers?



What are potential benefits?
What if any are the costs?
Unintended consequences?
Other potential concerns?





Father Friendliness



Program Environment

Family Partnerships

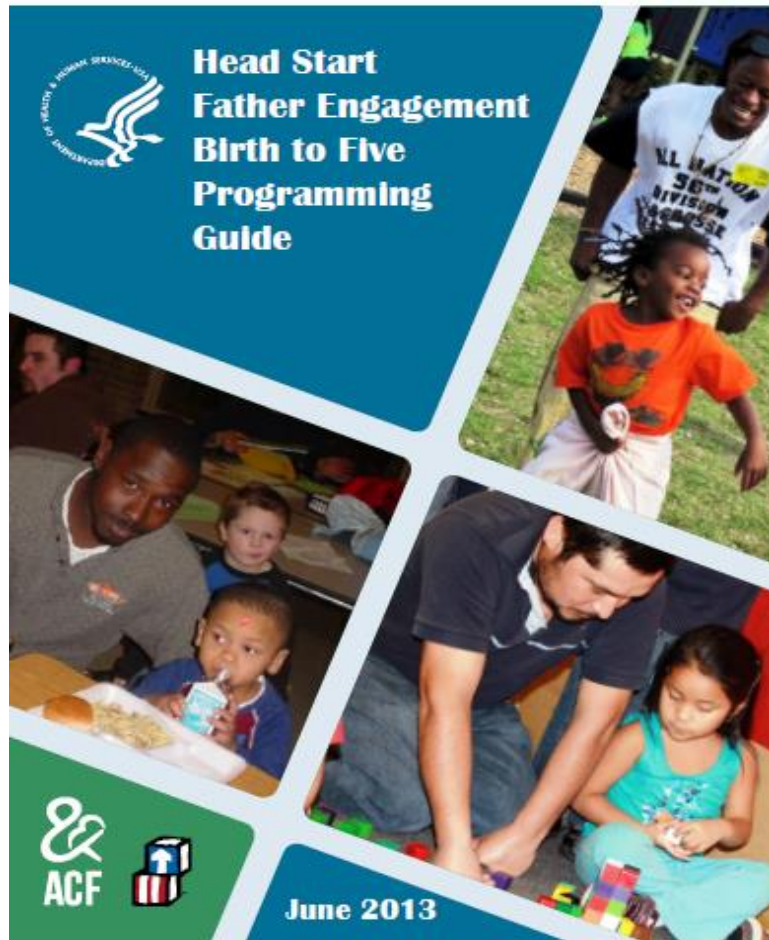
Teaching and Learning

Community Partnerships

PROGRAM IMPACT
AREAS



NEW Father Engagement Resources



Best Practices in Family and Community Engagement Video Series: Engaging Fathers



NEW Father Engagement Resources



Fathers are important to their children, families and communities.

- Focus on relationship building with fathers
- Explore how program leadership, continuous improvement, and professional development supports father engagement in your program.
- Utilize the Father Engagement Resources to:
 - Assess family and father engagement
 - Hold Thoughtful Conversations
 - Conduct Program Planning
 - Engage in Staff Development
 - Implement, Evaluate, Review



Thank you!



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