



Implementation Planner

Goals for Family Involvement

Clarify goals for family involvement. Work with staff to develop short and longer-term goals, and ensure that all work as a team to achieve them.

Check all that apply, and then develop your own in more detail specific to your program.

Our program will improve family involvement efforts to:

- Ensure all families feel welcome and that the program encourages their continued involvement in any way possible
- Help families gain access to the organizations, people, and resources they need to support their children and themselves
- Find innovative and differentiated ways to involve families that utilize their skills and address their concerns
- Help families find additional ways to be involved in their children's lives and support their healthy development
- Support better student behavior and academic performance in school and the program
- _____
- _____



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Knowing families and their cultures

Utilize these different strategies promote stronger relationships between families and program staff.

	More detail
Strategies for better knowing families	
Provide time in program orientation meetings at the beginning of the year for families to get to know one another and connect with staff	
Sponsor discussions and support groups	
Set aside program space for families to use to meet, talk, and support one another	
Learn about families by talking to program youth	
Plan projects that encourage youth to talk with family members about their culture, upbringing, and dreams for the future	
Visit the neighborhoods, popular meeting places, and other important locations of your program families	
Make families feel comfortable visiting and helping out with the program by consistently providing opportunities for them to do so	
Learn about and honor the cultures of program families and youth	
Do home visits if possible	
Go to sporting events and music- and art-related performances for program youth	
Create or improve your parent/family handbook	
Gather information and feedback on your engagement efforts to revise accordingly	
Find big (family nights, program orientation, etc.) and small (phone calls, chatting with families when they pick up youth, etc.) ways to better know and understand families	
Find translators and use translated materials whenever necessary	
Other	
Other	



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Understanding and overcoming challenges to family involvement

Explore common family involvement challenges, possible underlying causes, and potential solutions.

Challenges	Possible underlying causes	Potential solutions
Forms sent home to be signed are never returned.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Youth misplaces the form. - Youth forgets to show it to family. - Families don't understand the form. - Family members work in the afternoon and evening and don't see youth until they are asleep. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Create a folder for important forms. - Choose one day a week for important forms to go home so families know when to look for them. - Translate the form into the appropriate languages and go over the form with youth so they can explain them to their family members. - Send forms electronically or through the mail.
Only a few families attend open houses or other meetings related to the program.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Families don't have easy access to transportation to the program site. - Family members can't get time off from their jobs. - Family members don't have people to look after their children. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Coordinating around bus schedules, providing transportation and having your event at a more central location are all ways to increase attendance. - Plan events on weekends or repeat the event on different days and at different times to allow more families to attend. - Provide free childcare and dinner if budget allows.
Families never answer our phone calls and don't return them when we leave messages.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Families phone numbers may have changed or been disconnected. - Families may not be able to reach you during the day because of work or family obligations. - Families may not speak English well enough to carry on a phone conversation. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Get updated contact information throughout the course of year and use other communication methods (email, regular mail, etc.). - At the beginning of the year, let families know when you can be reached. - Use an interpreter to talk for you or learn enough of their home language to ask them to come in for a visit.
Family members don't come into the building when they pick up their		



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children		
Families don't take the program seriously. They just view us as babysitters.		
Families have had bad past experiences in schools and are reluctant to get involved.		
Families don't know how to help their children with homework.		
OTHER		



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Supporting and involving families

Family involvement requires constant efforts in engage, support, and involves families in your program.

Examine the strategies below and personalize them for your particular situation.

	Personalization
Go off-site! Visit them at places of worship, popular meeting places, and their homes.	
Carry out parenting workshops, special events, and efforts to improve the program. Involve families whenever possible.	
Create a space at your site for families to network, talk to staff members, and connect with community resources.	
Think of your program as a hub where families can share ideas and resources, seek out support, and problem solve with other families or staff.	
Remind families about the importance of family involvement by sharing research on how it improves youth's academic and life outcomes.	
Find innovative and engaging ways to get to know your program families.	
Offer involvement opportunities that fit the age of the youth you serve.	
Incorporate program youth into designing and providing different involvement opportunities.	



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The Program "Family Handbook" clearly welcomes families and offers them ways to get involved.	
Involve families in projects and special events.	
OTHER	



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