



Creating a Family Guidebook

Your family guidebook should clearly explain program policies and procedures and help families understand how to be involved in the program. Key components of a family guidebook include:

- An introduction to your program
 - Program history
 - Goals and objectives
 - A welcome from the director
- Directory of staff members
 - Include pictures
 - Have short bios
 - History in the program and working with youth
- Calendar of events
 - Special events
 - Holidays
 - Early or late days
- Program rules and expectations
 - Rules for different program locations (outside, bus, classrooms, etc.)
 - Responsibilities of youth in the program
 - Consequences for not following rules and procedures
 - Rewards for positive behavior
- Policies and procedures
 - Guidelines for food served and allowed in the program
 - Arrival and dismissal
 - Medication policies
 - Telephone use by children
 - Bringing items from home into the program
- Academic expectations
 - Amount of homework done in the program
 - Sharing of grades and state test information
 - How families can help
- Involvement opportunities and policies
 - Family involvement philosophy
 - Existing and potential opportunities for involvement
 - Ways to share concerns and ideas

Other ideas

- Leave areas such as “Responsibilities of youth” and “Potential opportunities for involvement” blank to allow youth and families to fill them in once they are decided.
- Include a table of contents or quick reference guide that helps families get to specific pages fast.
- Include a history of past family involvement in the program
- Include your guidebook or parts of it. on your program website
- Leave blank sections where families can fill in updated information such as youth grades and progress reports and family volunteer hours or points.