



Why won't they follow through? **Building Impactful & Transformative Relationships with Families**

Course Objective: Label a strategy to establish a cooperative, reciprocal, and impactful relationship with each child's family

"A partnership suggests mutual respect, an acceptance of equivalent expertise, and a reciprocal relationship in which each partner shares information and expectations with the other." Pugh 1985



The Goal: To Collaborate

To work jointly with others or together especially in an intellectual endeavor.

"An early childhood educator collaborated with the family to find a solution that worked for both."

*Cooperate *Join forces *Get together *Unite *Participate *Come together *Team up *Coproduct *Be in "Cahoots"

Family's Main Question:

"Can you help my child blossom?"



"How your actions answer [this] question will affect the parent's relationship with their child and their wellbeing... And their relationship and partnership with you."

Source: Zero to Three Podcast by Jerlean Daniel, Ph.D.

***Value my child = I value you = I make an extra effort**

***Value me = I value you = I make an extra effort**

***The answer to gaining follow through? - Build the Relationship!**

1) Be Curious:



✓ Ask open-ended questions that invite connection and help you get to know the family's world

- What are your favorite or most valuable holidays? How does your family celebrate those?
- How would you like to communicate?
- How did you choose your child's name?
- What brings your family joy?
- What brings your family stress?
- What is day-to-day life like for your family?
- How has your parenting journey been so far?
- What do you enjoy about parenting?
- What was it like for you as a child?
- So far, what is the favorite time of your life?
- What was a day like for you when you were a child? What did you enjoy?
- What are your main goals as a parent? What do you try to do? What do you avoid doing?
- What has been challenging about parenting this child?
- If you had a whole day and you could do whatever you wanted, what would you do?
- How has life changed since caring for young children?
- What brings you stress? What helps you calm?
- Who, in your life, brings you the most joy?
- What are you best at?



✓ Keep a tally, making sure to connect with each and every family member

✓ Become scientists together



What do you currently do to build a rewarding relationship with the families, especially those you find difficult to work with?



Building Impactful Relationships with Families

2) Increase Positive Communication:

"Effective communication requires more than an exchange of information. When done right, communication fosters understanding, strengthens relationships, improves and builds trust." -Liz Papadopoulos

- ✓ **Be positive:** Developing a "proactive, multilayered communication plan, ... can help keep the majority of the messages to families positive, constructive, and encouraging."



- ✓ **Check your ratio:** Keep your messages a minimum of at least 5+ to 1-
- ✓ **Avoid negative communication:** Judgement, defensiveness, distracted interaction, advice giving, lack of interest, raising intensity, denying feelings, lecturing, "me too"

- ✓ **Increase positive communication:** Active listening, validation, mutual sharing, specific praise, supportive statements, checking in, reframing, focused attention, seek clarification

- ✓ **Show your love!**

3) Value Family's Strengths and Contributions:

- ✓ **Beware (or BE-AWARE) of the human brain's negativity-bias**
- ✓ **Make up positive stories**
- ✓ **Assume positive intent**

If you don't like something, change it. If you can't change it, change your attitude. - Maya Angelou

Be the calm cool water (rather than starting a fire)

Interpretation of Family Member's Behavior

Reframe (calm, cool water). Why else might they be doing this?

"That parent doesn't even care enough to follow through with this simple task..."



"They must not understand why this is important. I wonder what they think or feel about this requirement?"

"Parent keeps rescheduling because they don't care about what we are working on."



"My child is having trouble separating because we sleep with them at night."



✓ Attend longer, seeking to understand the family's world

- "You seem to be doing so much, tell me more about what life looks like for you."
- "You have seemed a bit distracted, is everything okay?"
- "How are you holding up lately?"
- "I noticed you have been lingering at goodbye time. How are you feeling about separation?"

✓ Notice family strengths

✓ Show gratitude and appreciation for what the family *does do*



Evaluation:



Label a strategy to establish a cooperative, reciprocal, and impactful relationship with each child's family



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