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Sustaining and Supporting Family Leaders





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Today's Presenters/Facilitators

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Session Outcomes

Participants will be able to:

- Identify strategies, practices, and approaches for effectively preparing and supporting family leaders to engage in programmatic and policy decision-making.
- Identify content and related resources that can be used to develop a comprehensive and sustainable family leadership development program.





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Getting Set-up with Poll Everywhere



Mobile Phone:

Send a text to 37607 message ECPCTA



Tablet or Laptop:

Go to PollEv.com/ecpcta

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Who is in the room?

Parents

EI Providers

ECSE Providers

ECE Providers

Higher Ed Representatives

Administrators or Lead Agency Staff

Child Care Providers

Head Start Providers

Other



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What's the first word that comes to mind when you hear "family leadership?"

Start the presentation to see live content. Still no live content? Install the app or get help at PollEv.com/app





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Federal Commitment





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Federal Legislation

- Head Start Act
- Child Care Development Block grant (CCDBG)
- Maternal, Infant and Child Health Home Visiting Program
- Public Health, Title V
- Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA)
- Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA)





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OSEP Parent Program

- 3 components
 - **Parent Training and Information Centers (PTIs)** - serve the population of an entire State or specific region in a State
 - **Community Parent Resource Centers (CPRCs)**– operate at the local level in an identified community that includes underserved parents of children with disabilities, including low income parents, parents of limited English proficient children, and parents with disabilities.
 - **Parent Technical Assistance Centers (PTACs)** – there is a national PTAC and 4 regional PTACs provide TA to the PTIs and CPRCs



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PTIs and CPRCs

PTIs and the CPRCs provide almost identical services to families:

- Provide appropriate training and information to parents of children with disabilities;
- Serve families of infants, toddlers, and children with the full range of disabilities;
- Ensure the training and information meets the needs of all parents, including low-income parents and parents of limited English proficient children;
- Assist parents to:
 - better understand the nature of their children’s disabilities,
 - how to communicate effectively and work collaboratively with personnel responsible for providing services,
 - participate in decision making processes and the development of IEPs and IFSPs; assist parents in resolving disputes effectively;
- Assist parents and students to
 - understand their rights and responsibilities under IDEA, and
 - how to effectively use procedural safeguards.



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PTACs

- The PTACs provide TA on the following:
 - Effective coordination of parent training efforts;
 - Dissemination of scientifically based research and information; promotion of the use of technology;
 - Reaching underserved populations;
 - Including children with disabilities in general education programs;
 - Facilitating transitions; and
 - Promoting alternative methods of dispute resolution, including mediation
- PTACs also participate in the broader TA & D Network





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U.S. Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP) Parent Training & Information Centers

- **Work** with families of infants, toddlers, children, and youth with disabilities, birth to 26
- **Help** parents participate effectively in their children's education and development
- **Partner** with professionals and policymakers to improve outcomes for all children with disabilities
- **Collaborate** with early childhood TA centers

Find your parent center at:

<https://www.parentcenterhub.org/find-your-center/>

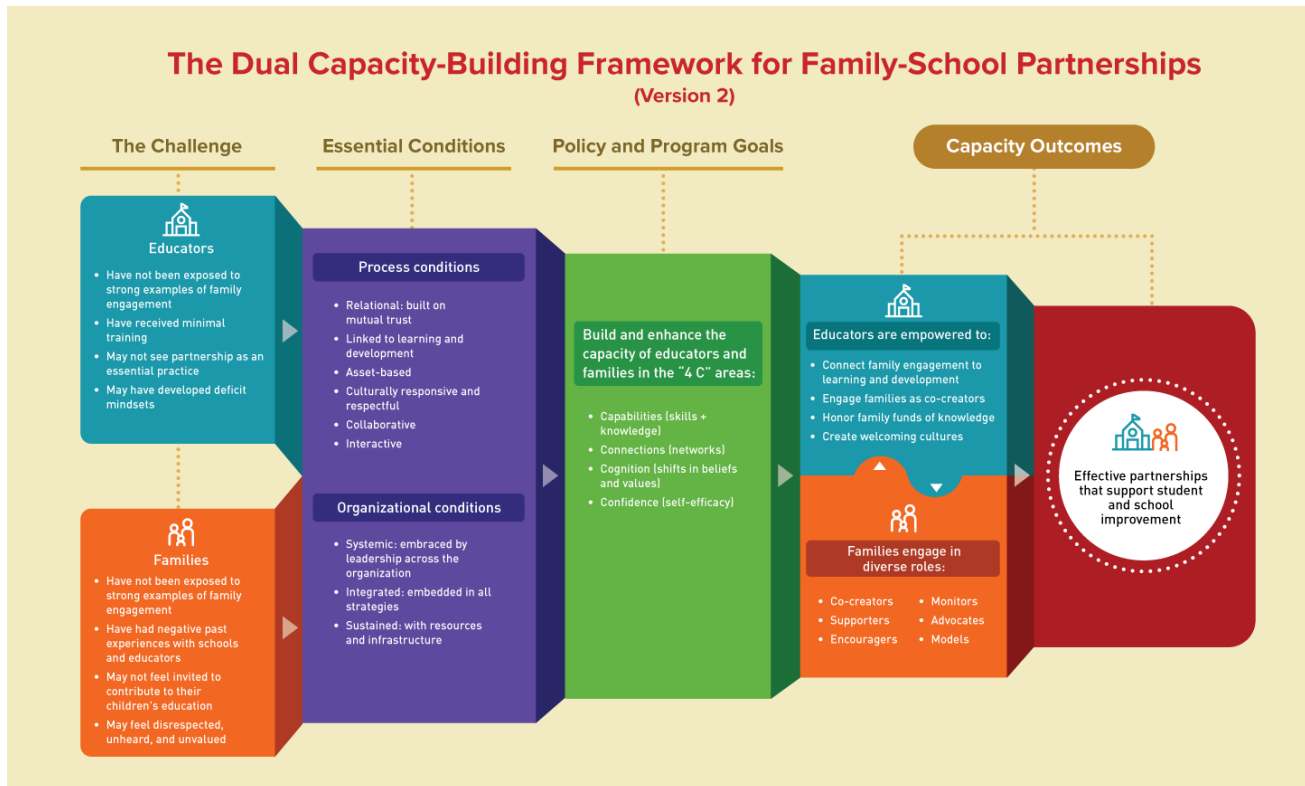




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U.S. Department of Education's Dual Capacity-Building Framework for Family-School Partnerships





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U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

POLICY STATEMENT ON FAMILY ENGAGEMENT FROM THE EARLY YEARS TO THE EARLY GRADES

May 5, 2016

PURPOSE

This policy statement from the U.S. Departments of Health and Human Services (HHS) and Education (ED) provides recommendations¹ to early childhood systems and programs on family engagement.

Family engagement refers to the systematic inclusion of families in activities and programs that promote children's development, learning, and wellness, including in the planning, development, and evaluation of such activities, programs, and systems. For family engagement to be integrated throughout early childhood systems and programs, providers and schools must engage families as essential partners when providing services that promote children's learning and development, nurture positive relationships between families and staff, and support families. The term "family" as used in this statement is inclusive of all adults who interact with early childhood systems in support of their child, to include biological, adoptive, and foster parents; grandparents; legal and informal guardians; and adult siblings. Early childhood systems include child care options, Head Start and Early Head Start, early intervention programs, preschool programs, and elementary school from kindergarten through third grade. Providers include teachers and paraprofessionals in schools, preschools, and Head Start and Early Head Start classrooms; child-care providers, early intervention service providers; related service personnel; comprehensive services staff; and other professionals that work directly with children in early childhood systems.

Family engagement promotes children's learning and healthy development

The lives and experiences of young children are intertwined with those of their families. Families are children's first and most important teachers, advocates, and nurturers. Strong family engagement in early childhood systems and programs is central—not supplemental—to promoting children's healthy intellectual, physical, and social-emotional development; preparing children for school; and supporting academic achievement in elementary school and beyond. Research indicates that families' involvement in children's learning and development impacts lifelong health, developmental, and academic outcomes. Family engagement in early childhood systems and programs supports families as they teach, nurture, and advocate for their children, and in turn, family engagement supports and improves the early childhood systems that care for and teach children. When families and the programs where children learn work together and

¹ The information in this document is intended to assist State and local agencies to carry out their obligations under the applicable statutes and regulations and does not impose any new requirements.

U.S. Dept. of Health & Human Services/Dept. of Education Policy Statement on Family Engagement in the Early Grades

Provides recommendations to early childhood systems and programs



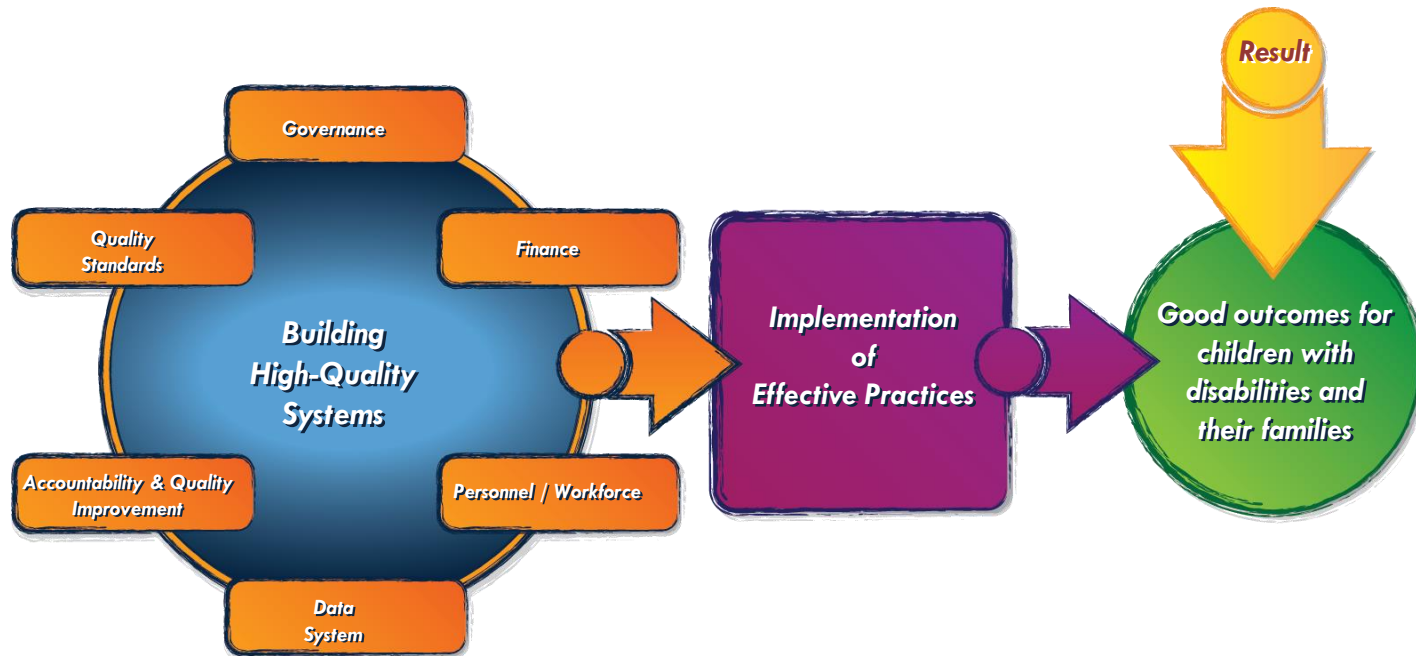


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A System Framework for Building High-Quality Early Intervention and Preschool Special Education Programs

Family engagement cuts across all components of high-quality systems.



Available at: ectacenter.org/sysframe





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CONNECTING FAMILY ENGAGEMENT PRACTICES AND FAMILY LEADERSHIP





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Definition of Family Engagement

Family engagement refers to the systematic inclusion of families in activities and programs that promote children's development, learning, and wellness, including in the planning, development, and evaluation of such activities, programs, and systems.

Source: U.S. Dept. of Health & Human Services/Dept. of Education's [Policy Statement on Family Engagement in the Early Grades](#)





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Professional Values and Commitments

Programs with strong family engagement have certain values and commitments in common that, in turn, promote family leadership (Geller, McAlister, & Tung, 2015):

- Build upon family members' strengths and assets
- Value and support family members' ideas and opinions
- Incorporate family voices into decision-making and implementation of new initiatives/reforms
- Provide multiple ways of soliciting family input
- Provide continuous feedback to families, with honest and open sharing of thoughts, ideas, and information

Additional references: Martinez-Cosio, 2010; Ishimaru 2014; Warren & Mapp, 2011





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What We Know about Family Leadership

- When families are **engaged as** leaders, they can:
 - Place concerns on policy and program agendas that were not previously acknowledged;
 - Suggest and act on new ways to solve problems;
 - Draw on their own political and organizational networks to influence change; and
 - Bring to bear supportive resources (Fine, 1993).
- Family leadership efforts are most effective when they are broadly supported by program staff (Dyrness, 2011; Ishimaru, 2014).
- For family members to effectively engage in leadership and advocacy activities, they must be met with trust and respect by professionals and other family leaders (Turnbull, Turnbull, Erwin, Soodak, & Shogren, 2015).





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Beliefs about Leadership

- **Leaders are not born** – they rise out of a person’s passion for how they want the world to be.
- **Leadership isn’t a gift** – it’s accessible to anyone who wants it.
- **Leadership isn’t a calling** – it’s a matter of listening to a question and trying to come up with an answer.
- **A leader is anyone** who has a very big and compelling story of how it could all turn out.

Source: Serving on Groups That Make Decisions





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DEC Recommended Practices: Family Practices

10 family engagement practices

- F10: Practitioners inform families about **leadership and advocacy** skill-building opportunities and encourage those who are interested to participate.



Available at: <http://www.dec-sped.org/dec-recommended-practices>





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DEC Recommended Practices Ambassadors

The image shows a video player interface. At the top, the logo for the ECTA Center is displayed, with "ECTA" in blue and "Center" in a dark blue script font. Below the logo is the text "The Early Childhood Technical Assistance Center". In the center of the video frame, the text "Meet the aRPy Ambassadors" is shown, with "aRPy" in a large, orange, stylized font with a white outline. At the bottom of the video player, there is a progress bar and control icons, including play, volume, and a timestamp of "0:04 / 1:58".

ECTA Center
The Early Childhood Technical Assistance Center

Meet the **aRPy**
Ambassadors

0:04 / 1:58





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Family Ambassador Roles

- To bring awareness to the existence of the RPs and the resources that support their implementation within the Parent Center network
- To collaborate with fellow Family Ambassadors to develop and share strategies and resources for informing families about the RPs
- To share the DEC RPs and ECTA resources with families and with Parent Center colleagues and staff
- In states where there is also a Professional Ambassador, collaborate with that individual to further raise awareness of the RPs





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Sustaining Family Leaders





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WHAT ARE YOU DOING:

- To Recruit Family Leaders?
- To Sustain Family Leaders?
- To Avoid Burning them Out?
- To build a Cadre of Leaders who support one another?





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Before

- Articulate purpose of the work / decision / discussion
- Describe role of stakeholders
- Provide resources to build background knowledge on implementation and related data that will be discussed during meetings

During

- Invite unique perspectives
- Provide a safe forum to ask questions, share information, and confirm understandings
- Use effective techniques for leading group discussion to ensure each voice is heard

After

- Close the loop - communicate decision and provide rationale
- Identify areas of needed improvement and strategies for addressing those areas in a timely and effective manner



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- Sustaining meaningful engagement of families starts at recruitment.
 - Be clear about what you are asking of them.
 - Provide the length of the commitment
 - Provide a range of opportunities, requiring varying levels of time and commitment.
 - Remember that that families who are engaged in smaller ways at first might become more deeply engaged over time.





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Providing Roles for Family Leaders

- Some family members may not see themselves as leaders. A personal invitation let's them know that you recognize leadership traits in them.
- Ask family members to take on a specific role that is compatible with what you know about their individual experiences, expertise, or skills.
- Provide opportunities to:
 - Attend and present at conferences
 - Serve on committees or task forces
 - Participate in staff and family development
 - Plan special events





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What Do Family Leaders Want/Need

- Alternative ways to participate
- Varying meeting locations for convenience
- Initial orientation and training
- Flexible meeting and event times
- Mentoring (developing leadership skills)
- Ongoing training
- Financial compensation/other supports

Sustaining and Diversifying Family Engagement in Title V MCH and CYSHCN Programs (2016)





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Supporting Families in Leadership Roles

ecta Early Childhood
Technical Assistance Center

Conversations with Family Leaders: Final Reflections

0:04 / 6:59

CC Settings Full Screen

A video player interface with a blue background. The text "ecta Early Childhood Technical Assistance Center" is at the top. Below it is the title "Conversations with Family Leaders: Final Reflections". At the bottom, there is a green progress bar with a play button, a volume icon, and the time "0:04 / 6:59". To the right of the progress bar are icons for closed captions (CC), settings (gear), full screen, and a refresh icon.

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Takeaways

- Develop authentic partnerships
 - *But what does that mean?*
 - *How does that happen?*
- Identify programmatic activities in which families can participate and articulate a clear, intentional clear purpose for their involvement
- Use a variety of methods to inform families of opportunities to become involved
- Close the loop about decisions





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Find Us Online

ECTA Center: <http://ectacenter.org>

ECPC: <https://ecpcta.org/>

Parent to Parent of Georgia: <http://p2pga.org/>





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The Early Childhood Technical Assistance Center



The ECTA Center is a program of the FPG Child Development Institute of the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, funded through cooperative agreement number H326P170001 from the Office of Special Education Programs, U.S. Department of Education. Project Officer, Julia Martin Eile.



Early Childhood Personnel Center



The Early Childhood Personnel Center is a project of the A.J. Pappanikou Center for Excellence in Developmental Disabilities at the University of Connecticut Health, funded through cooperative agreement number H325B17008 from the Office of Special Education Programs, U.S. Department of Education. Project Officer, Tracie Dickson.



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Thank You

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