Nurturing Positive Family and Professional Partnerships

Family-Professional partnerships are critical to young children’s success. Nurturing positive relationships between families and professionals is essential to providing children with the responsive environment they need to succeed.

**FAMILIES ARE ESSENTIAL TEAM MEMBERS**

- You know your child better than anyone else - sharing your perspective and experiences is essential!
- You are an equal collaborator in making decisions about your child’s behavior supports.
- Collaboration allows for the development of consistent goals across settings to help your child succeed.
- You are your child’s strongest advocate in making sure they get the support they need.

**COMMUNICATION IS KEY!**

Families and professionals should feel comfortable asking questions and providing information about the child to make sure the child is receiving the support they need.

- You can talk about:
  - How to prevent challenging behavior
  - How to respond to challenging behavior
  - How to use a visual support (ex: a visual schedule or timer)
  - What behavior looks like in different settings (ex: home, school, clinic)
  - How each person can be involved in planning and decision-making
  - Resources families can use at home
  - What supports are working or not working
  - What skills the child might need work on

- Most importantly, talk about the child’s successes to celebrate all the work each of you (and the child!) have put in.

**TIPS FOR PROFESSIONALS**

Being involved will look different with each family. Some helpful tips are:

- Have meetings to talk about how things are going for the child
  - Use this time to talk about what is working and what isn’t so you can make changes you are both comfortable with
- Talk about the child’s accomplishments
- Share data with the family and ask about any data they have collected
- Ask the family how they prefer to be contacted
- Share new resources with the family
- Check-in with the family about how they are doing
- Be responsive and patient when communicating. You are both doing the best you can.

**TIPS FOR FAMILIES**

Being involved will look different for each family. Some helpful tips are:

- Have meetings to talk about how things are going for your family
  - Use this time to talk about what is working and what isn’t so you can make changes you are both comfortable with
- Talk about your child’s accomplishments together
- Take simple data at home that you can share with the professional
- Let the professional know what method of communication works best for you (ex: email, phone call)
- Be responsive and patient when communicating. You are both doing the best you can.

For more information on how to support social emotional development, visit [https://cainclusion.org/teachingpyramid/materials/family/](https://cainclusion.org/teachingpyramid/materials/family/)