Learning Session 4: How Can We Engage Families as Partners?

Early Childhood Health Promotion and Obesity Prevention

National Early Care and Education Learning Collaboratives (ECELC) Project

Acknowledgements

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  - For the evaluation component of this national effort
Presenting Storyboards

Breastfeeding Support
Call to Action

“One of the most highly effective preventative measures a mother can take to protect the health of her infant and herself is to breastfeed. The decision to breastfeed is a personal one, and a mother should not be made to feel guilty if she cannot, or chooses not to breastfeed. The success rate among mothers who choose to breastfeed can be greatly improved through activity support…”

Action: Ensure that all early care and education providers accommodate the needs of breastfeeding mothers and infants.

Why Do Moms Need Your Support?

- 81% of moms desire to breastfeed
- 76% of moms start breastfeeding
- 60% of moms do not meet their breastfeeding goals (frequency and/or duration)
- Returning to work is the primary reason for ending breastfeeding
- Shorter duration of breastfeeding if baby is in an early care and education environment

Breastfed Babies are Healthier

- 63-77% lower risk of respiratory infections
- 23-50% lower risk of ear infections
- 26-40% lower risk of asthma
- 36% lower risk of SIDS
- 30% lower risk of type 1 diabetes
- 40% lower risk of type 2 diabetes
- 24% less likely to become obese
- 15-20% lower risk of leukemia
Breastfeeding Mothers are Healthier

- The longer and more exclusively a woman breastfeeds, the lower her risk of:
  - Type 2 diabetes
  - Breast and ovarian cancer
  - Osteoporosis
  - Rheumatoid arthritis

- Increased weight loss

Advocating for Breastfeeding

- Breastfeeding is more than a lifestyle choice, it’s a public health issue

- Benefits for employers
  - Moms miss fewer days of work

- Benefits for society
  - Decreased abuse and neglect
  - If 90% of mothers breastfed for 6 months:
    - 1,000 infant deaths could be prevented
    - U.S. could save $13 billion
Breastfeeding at Work

- Affordable Care Act requires support of hourly employees

- If mothers want to breastfeed upon return to work, they should have a:
  - Reasonable break time
  - Private space
  - A place to store their pumped milk
  - Work support system

Cultural Views of Breastfeeding

- Many different cultures look at breastfeeding as a natural choice for feeding
- Many countries have banned the practice of giving free or subsidized formula to new mothers
- Accepting and understanding cultural differences allows staff to become culturally sensitive to those parents and families who decide to breastfeed
- Some cultures discourage breastfeeding because it ‘spoils’ babies and/or discourages babies from sleeping through the night
**Breast Milk Can Save Your Program Money**

- **Breast milk is part of the CACFP meal pattern**
  - It is reimbursable for infants if fed by a care provider
  - It’s free! No equipment to purchase
  - Cost effective for families as well
  - For children over 12 months, breast milk may be substituted for cow’s milk
  - Doctor’s note may be required

- **Human milk is food**
  - You do **not** need to store human milk in a separate refrigerator
  - You do **not** need to wear gloves to give a bottle of human milk or formula
  - Contact with human milk is **not** hazardous exposure

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**Breastfeeding Report Card**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>National</th>
<th>Healthy People 2020 Targets</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ever breastfed</td>
<td>79.2%</td>
<td>81.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exclusively BF at 3 months</td>
<td>40.7%</td>
<td>46.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exclusively BF at 6 months</td>
<td>18.8%</td>
<td>25.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Breastfeeding at 6 months</td>
<td>49.4%</td>
<td>60.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Breastfeeding at 1 year</td>
<td>26.7%</td>
<td>34.1%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
General Infant Feeding

- **Breastfed babies do not need solid food before 6 months**
  - Early solids replace breast milk, which should still be main source of food
- **Formula fed babies**
  - Do not need solid foods before 4-6 months
  - Introduce solids when developmentally appropriate
- **Introduce solids at signs of readiness**
  - Sits with good head control
  - Opens mouth when food comes his/her way
  - Can move food from spoon to back of throat
- **Don’t feed cereal in a bottle**
  - It’s bad for teeth and will not help a baby sleep longer

Hunger Cues

- **Doctors recommend that all babies be fed when they are hungry, rather than on a schedule**
- **Hunger Cues**
  - Moving head side to side
  - Opening mouth and sticking out tongue
  - Puckering lips to suck
  - Rooting reflex
- **Watch the baby, not the clock**
- **It is normal for young babies to eat only 2-3 ounces of milk in one sitting**
- **We want babies to learn that when they are hungry, they eat, and then they are full**
  - Scheduled feeding disrupts this learning
10 Steps to a Breastfeeding-Friendly Program

1. Update/change program policies
2. Conduct staff trainings
3. Communicate with families
4. Provide learning and play opportunities for children
5. Practice proper storage and labeling
6. Provide a dedicated space for nursing
7. Provide employee support
8. Create a feeding plan
9. Refer families to appropriate community programs
10. Continue to learn and provide updates to program staff

Breastfeeding-Friendly Child Care Centers Handout

Ten Steps for Breastfeeding-Friendly Child Care Centers

The following ten steps describe ways that child care centers can provide optimal support for breastfeeding families. Below each step are specific actions to support that step.

1. Develop a comprehensive breastfeeding policy and make it available to staff, parents, and children.
2. Conduct staff trainings on breastfeeding and infant nutrition.
3. Provide early infant feeding education for all infants.
4. Provide access to breastfeeding support during the child care day.
5. Provide a dedicated space for nursing.
6. Provide a dedicated space for nursing.
7. Provide a dedicated space for nursing.
8. Create a feeding plan.
9. Refer families to appropriate community programs.
10. Continue to learn and provide updates to program staff.

- Free Early Steps: Breastfeeding-Friendly Child Care Centers Handout
Resources for Providers and Parents

- La Leche League
- National Resource Center for Health and Safety in Child Care and Early Education
- International Board Certified Lactation Consultants
- Baby-Friendly Hospital Initiative
- Women, Infants, and Children (WIC)
- CDC’s *Breastfeeding and Early Care and Education: Increasing Support for Breastfeeding Families*
How to Support Breastfeeding Mothers

Physical Activity Break
Elements of Family Engagement

- In order to effectively engage families, providers should practice:
  - Family support principles
    - How do you support families?
  - Parent involvement practices
    - How do you involve parents and work collaboratively with them?
  - Protective factors
    - How do you provide support that strengthens the parent/child relationship?

- Integration of all three elements can enhance the learning environment to support child development
What is Family Support?

- An approach to strengthening and empowering families and communities so they are able to foster the development of:
  - Children
  - Youth
  - Adult family members
- A shift in the way services are provided to focus on the whole family, not just the child enrolled in care
- Consider…
  - Culture
  - Individual family needs such as community services, social connections, etc.

Parent Involvement Practices

- Integrate culture and community
- Provide a welcoming environment
- Strive for program-family partnerships
- Make a commitment to outreach
- Provide family resources and referrals
- Set and reinforce program standards
Activities to Promote Cultural Awareness in Your Program

- Skin Color Match-ups- set out different colored stockings and ask children to match their stocking with their skin color and discuss their observations
- Take pictures of different hairstyles and types of hair and have children explore and talk about the differences
- Have parents and families bring in music of their culture and allow the children to dance to it
- Take thumbprints of each child and talk about the differences in the print (use magnifying glasses to assist with seeing the prints)

Does Your Program Feel Welcoming to All Families?

- What message does your program send to families?
- How do you incorporate various cultures into your classroom environment?
- Are there spaces and opportunities available for families to gather comfortably to talk?
- Are there opportunities for families to engage in decision making?
- Does your classroom have inviting displays that illustrate various cultures and learning opportunities to create a comfortable environment for children and families?
Strengthening Families™ Framework: Key Protective Factors

1. Parental resilience – ability to cope with challenges
2. Social connections – network of people who care
3. Knowledge of parenting and child development
4. Concrete support in time of need – access to resources
5. Social and emotional competence of children
Seven Strategies to Promote Protective Factors

1. Valuing and supporting parents
2. Facilitating friendships and mutual support
3. Strengthening parenting
4. Responding to family crises
5. Linking families to services and opportunities
6. Facilitating children’s social and emotional development
7. Observing and responding to early warning signs of child abuse and neglect

Strengthening Families Framework

- Promote engagement in the community and participation in community activities
- Help families value, build, sustain, and use social connections
- Create an inclusive environment
- Facilitate mutual support around parenting and other issues
- Address parenting issues from a strengths-based perspective
- Provide opportunities for our new parenting strategies
- Help parents foster their child’s social and emotional development
- Include children in social and emotional development activities and programming
- Help children develop a positive social identity and interact in a diverse society
- Respond proactively when social or emotional development trends to need support
Bringing Families Together: Building Community Video

Creating a Family-Friendly Environment Activity

Creating a Family Friendly Climate

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Family-Friendly Climate Feature</th>
<th>How do you put this into practice?</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Supportive culture where everyone is valued</td>
<td>Create a welcoming and inclusive environment for all family members.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Respectful interactions with children</td>
<td>Ensure that all interactions are age-appropriate and respectful.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Clear and consistent communication</td>
<td>Establish clear and consistent communication channels.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Adequate space and resources</td>
<td>Provide adequate space and resources for family activities.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Engagements of family members</td>
<td>Involve family members in program planning and decision-making.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Programs offered in a range of formats and times</td>
<td>Offer programs in various formats and times to accommodate different schedules.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Programs are accessible and convenient</td>
<td>Ensure programs are accessible and convenient for all family members.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Programs are well planned and well executed</td>
<td>Plan and execute programs effectively.</td>
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The Importance of Effective Communication

Hot Button Activity
Communication

- Develop positive communication strategies and focus on the well-being of the child
- Value open and honest communication to encourage partnerships

Cultural Competence

- Respect the individual
- Understand various cultural backgrounds
- Understand appropriate personal space and eye contact
Three Valued Communication Skills

- Active listening
- Verbal and nonverbal feedback
- “I” messages

Active Listening

- Facial Expressions
  - Should reflect emotional content of what is being said: smiling, frowning, etc.

- Body Language
  - Nodding head can indicate affirmation
  - Leaning towards speaker can convey attention
  - Maintaining an open body position can suggest an open mind
Verbal Feedback

- Verbal feedback such as “Yes” and “I understand” can convey feelings of understanding and acceptance of other’s feelings.

- Restating the words of the speaker can help the speaker feel as though they are understood and affirmed.

- Asking open-ended questions may bring important information or new understanding.

“I” Messages

- Reduces conflict.

- Increases dialogue.

- Allows the individual to accept responsibility for their personal thoughts, feelings and behaviors.

- Creates a positive environment that promotes effective communication.
"I" Messages

- There are three parts to "I" messages:
  - Express the feelings about the action
    - "I feel..."
  - State the action
    - "When..."
  - Describe the effect of the action
    - "Because..."

- Avoid using YOU
  - A YOU message can escalate conflict. These messages usually blame, accuse, threaten, order, put down or make the other person feel guilty.

"I" Message Examples

- Express the feeling
  - "I feel overwhelmed..."

- State the action
  - "...when you assign extra children to my classroom..."

- Describe the affect of the action
  - "...because I don’t have time to work on lesson plans."
“I” Messages With Staff

- “I” messages can be used:
  - When working with staff members
  - In a positive or negative manner
  - If you are an observer of a situation

Eight Tips for Communicating with Families

1. Take time to develop lasting relationships with families
2. Focus on your shared interest in the well-being of the child in the classroom
3. Be proactive with information
4. Try to understand and focus on the family’s perspective
5. In a difficult situation, take time to reflect and talk it through with a colleague before responding
6. Use the principles of active listening and respectful communication
7. Give families the benefit of the doubt
8. Remember that families can be strong partners in helping children grow up healthy and ready to learn
Discussion:

What are some habits that block or open communication?
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<th>Activities</th>
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Table Scenarios Activity
LS4 Feedback Forms