



THE NATIONAL CENTER ON  
**Parent, Family, and  
Community Engagement**

Putting the Head Start Parent, Family, and Community  
Engagement Framework to Work in Your Program:

# Integrating Strategies for Program Progress (ISPP) Part II





## Introduction

We are proud to bring you *Putting the Head Start Parent, Family, and Community Engagement Framework to Work in Your Program: Integrating Strategies for Program Progress, Part II*. This is the second in a series of exercises you can use with colleagues to become more familiar with the Office of Head Start Parent, Family, and Community Engagement Framework (PFCE Framework) – a research-based guide to developing ongoing partnerships with children’s caring adults to promote family well-being and children’s school readiness.

The first exercise in the series – *Integrating Strategies for Program Progress (ISPP)*, now referred to as ISPP, Part I – explores specific engagement strategies that lead to progress in reaching the PFCE Framework’s Outcomes for families and children. *Integrating Strategies for Program Progress, Part II (ISPP, Part II)* takes a next step. It is designed to deepen your understanding of the connections between strategies and practices that lead to a systemic, integrated, and comprehensive approach to parent, family, and community engagement (PFCE).

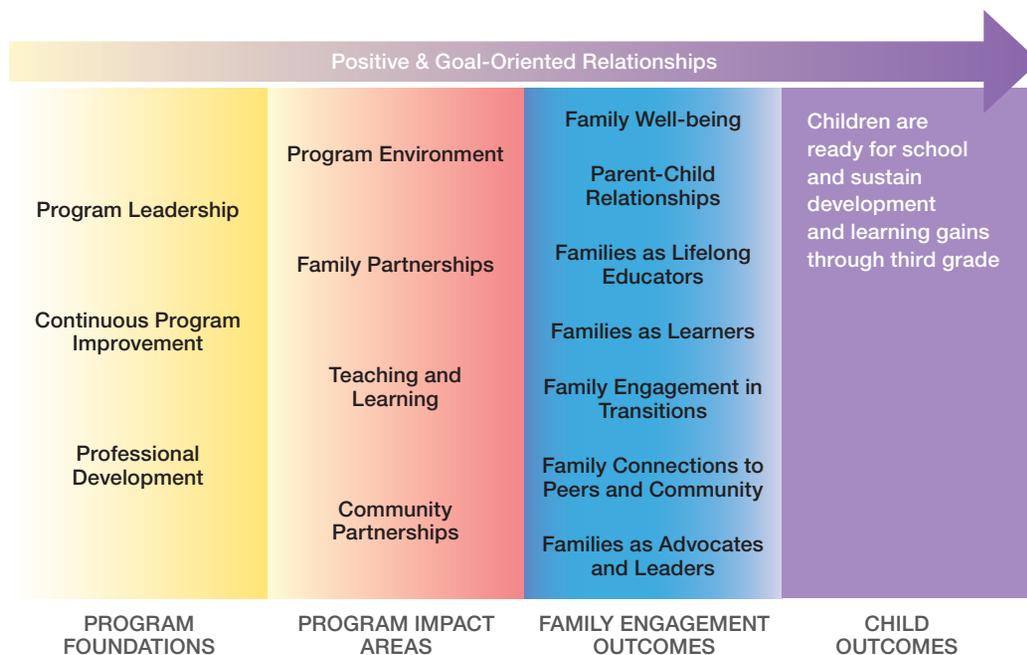
## PFCE Framework: A Systemic, Integrated, and Comprehensive Approach to Family Engagement

The research-based PFCE Framework presents a vision of family engagement for the Head Start/Early Head Start (HS/EHS) community that is systemic, integrated, and comprehensive. When family engagement strategies are integrated across organizational Elements – Program Foundations (systems) and Program Impact Areas (services) – programs are more likely to engage parents and families in a genuine and meaningful way. Successful PFCE also depends on positive and trusting relationships with parents and family members. In HS/EHS, these relationships focus on goals that families develop with the support of program leadership, staff, and engaged community partners. These relationships are most likely to take root within programs that take intentional steps to promote parent and family engagement. Using the PFCE Framework as a guide, we can identify opportunities to enhance engagement and improve family and child outcomes.

First, let’s review some of the other parent, family, and community engagement resources and how you can use them to enhance your engagement efforts.

### PARENT, FAMILY, AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT FRAMEWORK

When parent and family engagement activities are systemic and integrated across program foundations and program impact areas, family engagement outcomes are achieved, resulting in children who are healthy and ready for school. Parent and family engagement activities are grounded in positive, ongoing, and goal-oriented relationships with families.





**The Head Start Parent, Family, and Community Engagement Framework: Promoting Family Engagement and School Readiness, from Prenatal to Age 8**



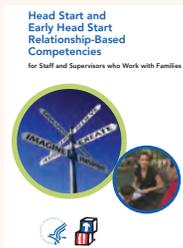
**Bringing the Parent, Family, and Community Engagement Framework to Your Program: Beginning a Self-Assessment**



**Using the Head Start Parent, Family, and Community Engagement Framework in Your Program: Markers of Progress**



**Putting the Head Start Parent, Family, and Community Engagement Framework to Work in Your Program: Integrating Strategies for Program Progress, Part I**



**Head Start and Early Head Start Relationship-Based Competencies for Staff and Supervisors Who Work with Families**

## PFCE Resources

The National Center on Parent, Family, and Community Engagement (NCPFCE) has developed – and will continue to develop – a number of resources to support your exploration and application of the PFCE Framework.

- *The Head Start Parent, Family, and Community Engagement Framework: Promoting Family Engagement and School Readiness, from Prenatal to Age 8* charts a research-based approach to program change, demonstrating how a program can integrate its efforts – across systems and service areas – to promote parent and family engagement and children’s learning and healthy development.
- *Bringing the Parent, Family, and Community Engagement Framework to Your Program: Beginning a Self-Assessment* provides a series of questions to spark thinking about what the PFCE Framework looks like in practice.
- *Using the Head Start Parent, Family, and Community Engagement Framework in Your Program: Markers of Progress (MOP)* helps you assess your program’s accomplishments in engaging parents, families, and the community.
- *Putting the Head Start Parent, Family, and Community Engagement Framework to Work in Your Program: Integrating Strategies for Program Progress, Part I (ISPP, Part I)* helps programs explore engagement strategies that lead to progress in reaching each Outcome of the PFCE Framework.
- *Head Start and Early Head Start Relationship-Based Competencies for Staff and Supervisors Who Work with Families (RBCs)* provides guidance for improving the preparation and ongoing professional development activities of staff and supervisors focused on using appropriate skills, knowledge, and actions for partnering with families.

PFCE resources can be found on the Office of Head Start’s resource website, Early Childhood Learning & Knowledge Center (ECLKC), at: <http://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/hslc/tta-system/family>.

## ISPP, Part II: Making Connections

ISPP, Part II offers an opportunity for you and your colleagues to increase your program's effectiveness by exploring the connections between family engagement strategies across the PFCE Framework Elements (systems and services) as a way to achieve child and family outcomes.

It is likely that you or your program already use engagement strategies, like those in ISPP, Part I, across the Framework Elements in your work with children and families. For example, you might offer professional development in family engagement to *all* staff. Or you might make changes to your program environment to reflect *all* families you serve.

In ISPP, Part II, we take a step further to explore the connections between engagement strategies as a powerful way to reach family and child outcomes. Consider the guidance we might give a child crossing the street when we want them to be safe: "Stop, look, and listen." Any one of these strategies increases the child's chances of safely crossing the street, but together, these strategies are a much more powerful way to promote safety than any one of them alone. The same is true with family engagement.

When PFCE strategies are interwoven through systems and services, we are more likely to make progress toward positive outcomes for children and families. To build on our previous example of a child crossing the street, we know that program leadership and professional development are critical Framework Elements for effective family engagement (yellow column - systems). When program leaders make family engagement a priority, communicate this to all staff through focused professional development, and at the same time support a program environment that includes a welcoming space for all families (pink column - services), we can make progress toward the Family Engagement Outcomes.

The connections you make between Framework Elements are shaped by the needs, strengths, and goals of the families you serve. There will be times when you and your program focus on engagement strategies related to one or two Elements. This focus is likely to shift as families move forward and/or face new challenges. As you revisit the Family Outcomes you want to achieve, you might see missing Elements that could affect your impact. What matters is making connections as a program-wide engagement strategy that can lead to new possibilities and benefits for children, families, your program, and for you.

### PFCE FRAMEWORK ELEMENTS

**Program Foundations** are found in the **yellow column** of the PFCE Framework. Without these three PFCE Framework Elements in place, families may not receive the high quality services they deserve.

- Program Leadership
- Continuous Program Improvement
- Professional Development

**Program Impact Areas** are found in the **pink column** of the PFCE Framework. With a solid PFCE foundation in place, program leadership and staff are set to work in partnership with parents, families, and the community on activities that promote family engagement and work toward family goals.

- Program Environment
- Family Partnerships
- Teaching and Learning
- Community Partnerships

When you infuse each of these PFCE Framework Elements into your program through a systemic, integrated, and comprehensive approach, your efforts lead to the ultimate goal of enhanced family and child outcomes.

## **PFCE FRAMEWORK FAMILY OUTCOMES** *(blue column)*

**Family Well-being.** Parents and families are safe, healthy, and have increased financial security.

**Positive Parent-Child Relationships.** Beginning with transitions to parenthood, parents and families develop warm relationships that nurture their child's learning and development.

**Families as Lifelong Educators.** Parents and families observe, guide, promote, and participate in the everyday learning of their children at home, school, and in their communities.

**Families as Learners.** Parents and families advance their own learning interests through education, training and/or other experiences that support their parenting, career, and life goals.

**Family Engagement in Transitions.** Parents and families support and advocate for their child's learning and development as they transition to new learning environments, including EHS to HS, EHS/HS to other early learning environments, and HS to kindergarten through elementary school.

**Family Connections to Peers and Community.** Parents and families form connections with peers and mentors in formal or informal social networks that are supportive and/or educational and that enhance social well-being and community life.

**Families as Advocates and Leaders.** Parents and families participate in leadership development, decision-making, program policy development, and community and state organizing activities to improve children's development and learning experiences.

## **How will using ISPP, Part II benefit my program?**

ISPP, Part II will help you understand why the PFCE Framework Elements matter for Family Engagement Outcomes (blue column). You will discover how PFCE strategies, when designed and connected in a systemic, integrated, comprehensive approach to parent, family, and community engagement, positively impact family and child outcomes. This exercise will also help you:

- Recognize the Framework Elements in program practice that will assist you in planning and continuous improvement.
- Expand your critical thinking about engagement practices.
- Apply your programmatic knowledge and understanding of the connections among the Framework Elements to identify new solutions that work for your unique program.
- Find strengths and opportunities within your program to support families more effectively.
- Understand the critical link all staff play, across content areas, to establish high quality, positive, goal-oriented relationships with families.

## Considerations for Using ISPP, Part II

ISPP, Part II offers two stories about people and situations in HS/EHS settings. These stories may remind you of some families and staff in your program. The first story is about Anna, a newly hired Family Service Worker. She has creative ideas about how her program can approach Family Partnership Agreements in a new way. The story highlights how Luisa, the Center Director, supports her efforts. The second story is about Alecia and her two young daughters, one of whom has a speech delay. Joseph, the family's Home Visitor, tries different strategies to partner with Alecia's family.

We encourage you to use the following stories and exercise in discussion with a group of staff who have different perspectives and roles (i.e., Director, Managers, Teachers, Family Service Workers). We all know that successful family engagement depends on collaboration among every person and organization that works with families. In other words, family engagement is everyone's business. In your discussions, we invite you to learn from colleagues and family members by sharing questions, successes, and challenges related to family engagement.

Depending on your goals, the group, and time limitations, you can choose to work with one or both stories. Setting up the space, gathering materials, and making decisions in advance will make the exercise more effective.

As you prepare and plan for the exercise, consider the following questions and recommendations:

- 1. Who will facilitate the exercise?**  
Choose a facilitator to introduce and debrief sections of the exercise with the large group.
- 2. Who will attend?**  
Gather a group of staff who have different roles, perspectives, and experiences. The diversity of the group will create a rich learning environment and open the group to new discoveries.
- 3. Will this group have additional opportunities to work together?**  
If the group will work together over time, you have more flexibility about how to structure follow-up activities.
- 4. How much experience does the group have with the PFCE Framework?**  
The stories illustrate how to weave together the Program Foundation and Program Impact Areas into comprehensive strategies that advance PFCE throughout the program. This task may be easier for some groups than others, depending on how familiar the group is with the PFCE Framework concepts.
- 5. How much time do you have?**  
Set a start and end time and appoint a timekeeper to help the group stay on track.
- 6. What materials (if any) do you need?**  
You may need to copy the story or stories and exercise instructions for participants. You may also use flipcharts or easel pads and markers to document the discussion.
- 7. Where will you meet?**  
Arrange the meeting space to accommodate both small and large group work. Participants can sit in small groups at tables, sit in small clusters of chairs, or begin in a circle and gather together when needed.

## FOR FACILITATORS

1. Introduce and preview the exercise for participants:
  - » The exercise is an opportunity for the group to think more deeply about the PFCE Framework.
  - » The group will be working with stories from Head Start and Early Head Start programs and will have the chance to work individually, in pairs and small groups, and in the large group.
  - » The exercise has several steps, and you will guide participants through each.
2. Choose the story:
  - » Based on your planning, assign a story or ask small groups to choose a story.
3. Follow the outline of Exercise Instructions, guiding the group through the questions and discussion.

## The Story of Anna and Luisa

Anna, a Head Start Family Service Worker, hoped to make her center's Family Partnership Agreement (FPA) more meaningful for families. She wanted to use the FPA as an opportunity for families to consider their goals for themselves and their children. The Center Director, Luisa, recognized that family goal setting was a challenge. There was often little follow-up to ensure that families received necessary support and were taking steps toward their goals. The FPA was often treated as a one-time required activity, rather than a meaningful process that continued throughout the year.

Anna's idea was to co-create a booklet with families that would be an unfolding "story" to document the lives of each family on her caseload. She wanted to help parents, and herself, keep track of progress and celebrate achievements along the way. Luisa welcomed Anna's suggestion and encouraged her to try her idea and take notes on the process and results. Luisa saw this as an opportunity to collect important data on family outcomes. They planned to discuss the experience as a regular part of reflective supervision and coaching. Anna and each family created a booklet that contained hopes, strengths, challenges, and goals for the year. Together they worked on topics such as financial security, continuing education, employment, and family health. Anna met with each family regularly to discuss the steps they were taking to reach their goals. After each session, she took notes and recorded their progress.

Anna's experience with all of the families was positive. One mother wanted to become a medical assistant, so she and Anna brainstormed about how to help her achieve this goal. They wrote a plan that included enrolling in a GED program, applying for a volunteer position at a local hospital, setting up a savings plan, finding sources of financial aid, and organizing an informational interview with a community college. Anna was thrilled to see this mother get more engaged and make progress toward her goals. Anna had similar experiences with all her families and noticed she did not have to contact them as often before getting a follow-up response.

Luisa was encouraged to learn that parents were interested in furthering their education. Luisa's passion for connecting parents with community resources came from both professional and personal experience. As a Center Director, she had seen education and job training contribute to the well-being of families. She knew current research showed that parents who have more education often have children who perform better in school. And, as a young

person growing up in a family with limited resources, she had benefited from school and social support and was able to earn her college degree. After getting permission from the families, Luisa shared collective data about their desire to fulfill educational goals with several community partners – GED programs, a community college, banks, and a Chamber of Commerce member – to explore a partnership to help HS parents meet their educational and employment goals.

The families were enthusiastic about the new format of the FPA and had ideas for making it even more useful. They wanted to include photos, class assignments, and other evidence of their children's progress. One parent suggested using social media to support each other's accomplishments and stay connected when they couldn't come together in person.

Based on the families' positive response, Luisa and her Policy Council:

- Invited Anna and a family she worked with to share their new approach to the FPA with other staff and parents.
- Offered professional development opportunities about Relationship-Based Competencies (ACF-IM-HS-12-05) so staff and supervisors could deepen their understanding about the booklets as a tool to develop respectful relationships and benefit the family.
- Asked families to work with staff to design a program environment (e.g. meeting space, online space, program climate and culture, staff attitudes) that would support peer networking to help families meet their goals.
- Established policy and a protocol for obtaining parental consent for sharing aggregate FPA data with community members.

After hearing more about the results, other staff were eager to try this innovative strategy. They were committed to strengthening the relationships between workers and families, and they saw the benefit of collecting real data on family outcomes. Luisa was excited to see staff were open to trying new strategies and noticed a renewed dedication to working with families.

Luisa recognized the value of this opportunity to use the group FPA data collected from the booklets. The data could be used for planning (as noted above for educational goals), and for continuous program improvement, including professional development, and mobilizing community support for family development and well-being.

# The Story of Alecia and Joseph<sup>1</sup>

Alecia is a single mother of two young daughters who enrolled her family in Early Head Start (EHS) at her mother's urging. Alecia and her children live in public housing, and Alecia is unemployed. She graduated from high school and attended the nearby community college for a brief period of time. Alecia's mother worried that her daughter was isolated and saw she was struggling to understand how to parent her children. She knew Alecia wanted to be the best parent she could be and had a number of goals she wanted to achieve but didn't know how. Alecia's mother suggested that an EHS program might be a good place to find support and build a community with other parents. Alecia agreed to learn more about the program. She wanted to get help with parenting and give her children a promising start in life. She also wanted to find a job and increase her chances of being financially independent.

Joseph, an EHS staff member, answered Alecia's questions about the program and shared some of the ways he thought it could be helpful. Alecia was encouraged and agreed to give the program a chance. Once Joseph completed the pre-enrollment forms with Alecia, he asked his Supervisor, Sue, if he could be Alecia's assigned Home Visitor. From talking with Alecia, he had learned she wanted to know more about her children's development and how she could support them. He thought his years of experience with EHS and his continuing education classes in Early Childhood Education gave him the professional background he needed to support Alecia and her daughters. In addition, Joseph had grown up with a single mother and believed he understood some of Alecia's struggles. Sue agreed Joseph would be a good match for Alecia and encouraged him to make arrangements for his first home visit.

## ***Is anyone home?***

In the beginning, Alecia seemed to be receptive to Joseph's efforts, but after some initial success, Alecia began to miss or cancel home visits. Joseph often knocked on the door, with no response. He could hear Alecia telling the children to hide and be quiet. Joseph was frustrated and confused, but didn't want to give up on Alecia. He was sure the EHS program could benefit her family and asked Sue for support.

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<sup>1</sup> NCPFCE extends its appreciation to Martha Staker of Project EAGLE for providing the first draft of this story.

## ***Leadership supports Joseph's efforts***

Sue brought the Center Director, Carmen, into the conversation and together they agreed to continue to reach out to Alecia. Sue and Joseph worked together to develop a plan to re-connect with Alecia. They brainstormed about specific strategies for how to build a stronger relationship with her and her children.

## ***Strategies for reconnecting***

Joseph tried several new ways to re-connect with Alecia. For example, he left notes at the house whenever he stopped by and included a warm message or a question about Alecia and the children. He would also leave his phone number so she could easily reach him. In addition, he dropped off brochures about fun events the family might want to attend – from a free puppet show at the library to a family potluck at the Early Head Start program. Joseph would leave his phone number again, with a note asking Alecia if she needed a ride. Joseph also reached out to Alecia's mother and asked if there were other family members or friends supporting Alecia and her daughters.

Sue and Joseph set up a schedule for reflective supervision sessions for Joseph to reflect on whether his strategies were effective. Carmen convened a staff focus group for Home Visitors to discuss challenging family cases they dealt with and how they managed to rebuild positive and productive relationships with those families.

## ***Slowly but surely, Alecia begins to respond***

Slowly, Alecia began to respond to Joseph's efforts to re-engage her in the program. At first, Alecia would let Joseph in the door, but barely engage in any conversation. Joseph accepted her level of comfort with him in her home and was careful not to intrude. While Joseph visited, he noticed Alecia's efforts to support her daughters' development. For example, he saw Alecia reading to them and commented on how important this time was for their relationship and skill building. Joseph observed how the girls would laugh and ask her to repeat parts of the story. He shared this with Alecia, noting how engaged her daughters were with her and each other. The more Joseph highlighted the girls' strengths and progress, the more comfortable Alecia seemed to become. After a while, she began to engage fully in conversations with Joseph.

## The Story of Alecia and Joseph (continued)

### **Joseph and the EHS team address a challenge**

Joseph was able to call attention to some positive areas of growth and development in Alecia's daughters, yet he also knew the girls had some challenges. Alecia's younger daughter had developmental delays in the area of language and literacy. Although Alecia had received the assessment data on her daughter's development, she believed her child would be just fine and grow out of any problems she was experiencing. After all, she reasoned, her older daughter was okay. Joseph sensed that Alecia was not very receptive to the idea that something needed to be 'done' about her daughter's language delay and decided that pushing the issue then would probably not be very productive.

Joseph continued to visit and develop a partnership with Alecia. At the same time, he and Sue worked with other program staff to put together a multi-disciplinary team to help address the family's needs. From previous experience, Joseph knew that sensitivity and patience were important with families who are facing a challenge. He and the EHS staff could provide support and resources, but Alecia needed to be ready before she would agree to participate.

Joseph continued to visit Alecia and her daughters in their home whenever possible. Other members of the EHS multi-disciplinary team took turns driving Alecia and her children to socializations and parent meetings where she listened to other mothers share their life stories. Alecia began to realize she wasn't alone. As she sat in parent meetings and watched her daughters interact with the other children, she realized that her younger daughter wasn't talking like other children her age. One day, Alecia burst out, "I want my daughter to talk like them."

### **Alecia is ready to access services for her daughter**

Alecia was now ready to discuss the data that had been gathered from her daughter's assessment report and come up with a plan to address the language delay. The team helped connect Alecia's daughter with a speech therapist and gave Alecia language and vocabulary building activities to do at home. Alecia felt proud she was able to do things to help her daughter make progress – it wasn't just the speech therapist or other "experts" who delivered the services. While the next year was not always smooth, Alecia stayed engaged in the program and was able to work toward her goals.

### **In closing**

During an exit interview, Carmen asked Alecia what kept her engaged in the program. Her answer was simple: "It was that big, burly man who came to my door every week. Even when I told him I didn't want any help, he just kept coming back. He never gave up on me. He believed in me even when I didn't believe in myself." Joseph felt very proud when Carmen and Sue told him what Alecia had said about him. As supervisors, they highlighted his persistence and the skills he had used to develop a supportive and trusting relationship with Alecia.

Upon reflection with her staff, Carmen realized they had learned a lot from Alecia about how to work with families. Joseph's commitment and relationship with Alecia was critical to her success. Seeing her daughter interacting with other children also made a difference for Alecia. When she was ready, it was important for Alecia to be involved with her daughter's language development and to receive tools and strategies for how she could make a difference at home. Alecia's experience reinforced that assessment data indicating a delay can be overwhelming for parents. But, when presented within the context of a trusting and respectful relationship, the data's implications can be safely explored.

Carmen created a professional development training series to help staff understand how to present assessment data to parents in collaborative, respectful, and individualized ways. This included being sensitive to parents and then, when parents are ready, giving concrete suggestions about what families can do to work on identified challenges. Carmen wanted her staff to have the skills to engage parents in an emotionally safe and meaningful discussion about their child's strengths and challenges. From there, the family and program can take steps together to ensure the best outcomes for the child.

Today, Alecia and her two daughters are active participants in the Early Head Start program. Alecia is looking into earning her CDA (Child Development Associate) so she can work with young children and their families.

## EXERCISE INSTRUCTIONS

### On Your Own: Read and Think About a Story

Find the assigned story and read it on your own.

While reading, think about and/or jot down answers to the following questions:

- What Family Engagement Outcomes did the story address?
- What PFCE strategies did the program use?
- Which Program Foundations did you see at work related to the strategies used in the story?
- Which Program Impact Areas did you see at work related to the strategies used in the story?

### In Pairs: Discuss Your Answers

After finishing the assigned story, gather in pairs to share your answers to the questions above. Then, discuss the following:

- Did some of the strategies draw on more than one Program Foundation and Program Impact Area? Which ones?
- In what ways was family engagement more successful when Program Foundation and Program Impact Areas were connected?

### Large Group Discussion: Dig Deeper

First, share what you discussed in pairs with the large group. Then, discuss the following question:

- What was it about the program in the story that allowed staff to effectively implement the identified strategies?

*For example:* Is it the value placed on the relationship between leadership and staff? The way leadership seeks staff ideas/input? The way staff members see the best in families and are committed to going above and beyond to find ways to engage them? Other ideas?

**TRY THIS:** If time allows for added discussion, try looking at the story from the perspective of staff in other roles.

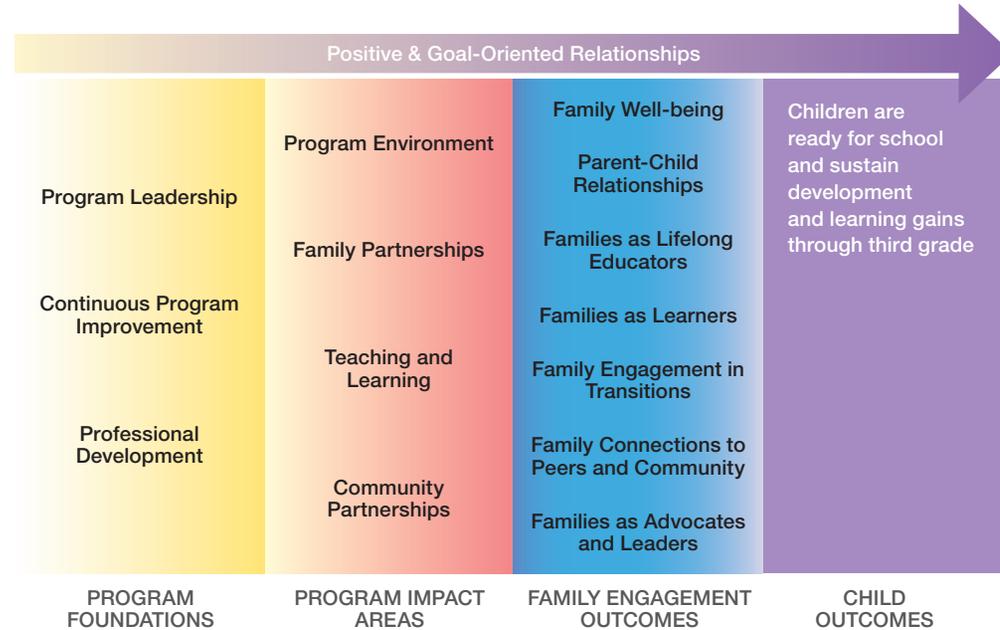
For example, if you are a Family Service Worker, you might see the story differently if you were a Teacher. If you are a Director, take the Home Visitor's perspective. This can help you explore opportunities for staff in different roles to collaborate with one another and support families more effectively.

## On Your Own: Linking Elements to Outcomes Diagram

Use the PFCE Framework graphic provided below to:

- Circle the Program Foundations, Program Impact Areas, and Family Engagement Outcomes you identified in the story.
- Draw lines or make notes to show how the Program Elements connect with the Family Engagement Outcomes.

See page 12 for an example of how to diagram the Elements and Outcomes.



## In Small Groups: Discuss the Connections

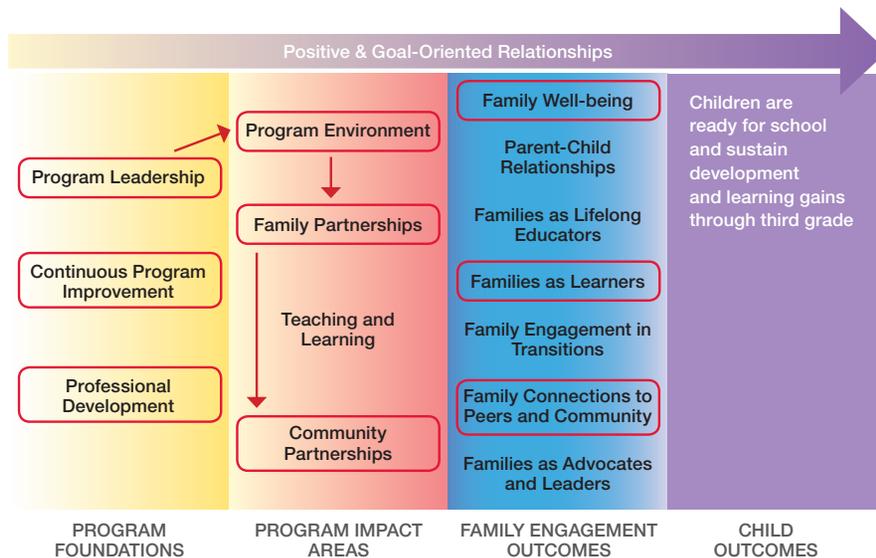
Use the Framework diagram for reference and discuss the following questions with your group:

- What are the major strategies the program used to help make progress toward the Family Engagement Outcomes? Which of the seven Elements are involved?
- Which of the strategies relate to more than one Program Foundation or Program Impact Area?
- How did work in one Element influence work in another area?
- What did you see as particular strengths or resources of the program? Are there other strategies you think the program could have used?
- Brainstorm ideas about additional PFCE strategies that might have worked. Focus on how the strategies could be made more effective by coordinating them across Program Foundations and Program Impact Areas.

## Example for Reference

### Linking Elements to Outcomes Diagram: *The Story of Anna and Luisa*

This sample diagram shows some of the Program Foundations, Program Impact Areas, and Family Engagement Outcomes we found in *The Story of Anna and Luisa*. If you read this story, how are the circled items and connections in the diagram similar to what your group found? How do they differ? Notice that we have included examples of just a few connections between the Framework Elements and Outcomes. We encourage you to continue drawing lines to show additional connections.



#### As you review the diagram, consider the following connections:

- Program Leadership (the Center Director, Luisa) fostered a Program Environment that would allow Anna to build relationships with families and engage them in goal-setting in a more meaningful way.
- A supportive Program Environment led to deeper Family Partnerships as Anna worked closely with families to understand their hopes, strengths, and goals. Strong Family Partnerships encouraged follow-up on action steps that improved Family Well-Being. Some of these action steps led to strengthening Community Partnerships to ensure families could access the resources needed (e.g. the volunteer position at the local hospital or the informational interview) and connect more deeply to the community.
- The effective Family Partnerships that Anna helped cultivate affected multiple Family Outcomes – including Families as Learners – as parents took steps to further their education and training, and pursue career and life goals.
- Program Leadership used the opportunity to enhance Professional Development opportunities for staff around relationship-based competencies and to bolster opportunities for data gathering and Continuous Improvement as they developed tools for keeping track of each family's progress.

## Follow-Up Activities

ISPP, Part II can spark ideas for many follow-up activities aimed at reaching a more integrated approach to PFCE, and as a result, greater effectiveness in working toward Family Engagement Outcomes. For example, you and your program might decide to:

Share stories with staff, families, and community partners about your own program's success in learning to work with families, including those whom staff initially did not know how to engage.

- What did you do to help staff and families connect with each other?
- How does what you did map to the PFCE Framework (refer to Framework, pg. 1)? For example, were there things you did to support staff in developing stronger relationships with families (Professional Development – yellow column)? Were there changes you made to help families feel more welcome (Program Environment – pink column)?

Understanding the strategies you wove together across the Elements to obtain results in the past can help you use them more effectively in the future.

Invite staff to collaborate on the creation of a "story" that focuses on a challenge your program faces.

- How does the story play out?
- What are some of the strategies you might use in the story that will help you make progress and address the challenge?
- How might you connect the strategies so that your efforts in one Element would impact your efforts in another Element?
- What are the strengths/resources of your program that allow you to move forward?
- What challenges might you face and how might you overcome them?

Learn with community partners about how you can work together on connecting strategies across your program Elements to support Family Engagement Outcomes. You may want to invite community partners to participate in this exercise with program staff. You could discuss stories of families who have become engaged and made progress in reaching their goal(s) because of the collaboration and integration of services in the program and community.

Another possibility is to meet with community partners to discuss successes and challenges you experience together in creating a more integrated approach to PFCE.

Use ***Beginning a Self-Assessment*** and ***Integrating Strategies for Program Progress, Part I*** to take a closer look at your program's current engagement strategies.

- What PFCE strategies are you using most effectively? What strategies are you working to improve? Are there strategies you do not currently use that could be helpful?
- Do you have any stories about situations where you connected engagement strategies easily?
- Are there steps you can take to connect strategies and create a more integrated approach to PFCE?

Use the **Markers of Progress** to gather ideas about what you and your program might build on or do differently to connect your PFCE practices across the Framework Elements. Then, develop a set of goals and related action plans. No matter how many Elements you choose to explore, look for connections.

- What connections do you see among Elements? How do these connections support and enhance PFCE?
- As you work to improve practices, what steps can you take to use strategies across content areas?
- How can you make building connections among Elements a program-wide goal?
- What steps can individuals and the program as a whole take to enhance connections between Elements that will ultimately help families make progress toward reaching their goals?

Use **Head Start and Early Head Start Relationship-Based Competencies** to review and plan professional development opportunities for staff and supervisors.

- Is there a way of talking about an integrated approach and the benefits of connecting the Elements that you might use regularly in your program to ensure staff and supervisors are on the same page?
- What stories about the collaboration among staff can you share to show the importance of seeing and building connections among strategies?
- How does the relationship between staff and supervisors support an integrated approach to PFCE? How may it be an obstacle?
- How can relationship challenges be addressed in a way that benefits everyone?

## ISPP, Part II - Closing Thoughts

Connecting your PFCE strategies across the Framework Elements makes it more likely that your program will successfully engage families, leading to improved positive family and child outcomes. Your program will be enriched as successful strategies build on each other. That can lead to higher efficiency, increased staff effectiveness, and stronger relationships with families. Connecting PFCE Elements can be the start of a positive program-wide cycle of change that will ultimately enhance the well-being of families and children's ongoing development and school readiness.





THE NATIONAL CENTER ON  
**Parent, Family, and  
Community Engagement**

**Contact us at:**  
[NCPFCE@childrens.harvard.edu](mailto:NCPFCE@childrens.harvard.edu)

**Visit us on the Web at:**  
<http://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/hslc/tta-system/family>

