



## HOW DO YOU PARTNER WITH FAMILIES?

Families, teachers, and schools who work together are better able to help children learn and succeed in school. To build an interactive partnership with families, you need a variety of approaches. Consider these key ways to build strong ties as part of your program's efforts to engage families.

### Celebrate family strengths:

- Support families as children's lifelong teachers. Encourage them to speak their home language and share interests with their child.
- Ask families if they would like to share about their culture with recipes, stories, songs, language, and traditional dress. Learn about the cultures of the families. Ask families to help choose materials and activities for class that reflect those cultures.



### Communicate often and in ways that are best for families:

- Find out how families want to communicate—email, in person, phone calls, or a website. Have informal chats and longer conversations.
- Find ways to communicate with all families. Use interpreters, learn words in home languages, and translate written material.
- Exchange information with families about their child. Include their child's daily successes and learning progress.



### Support families in ways that they want to participate:

- Ask parents about how they would like to help, either at school or at home, to support their child's learning, class activities, and school.
- Encourage them to take a leadership role in school activities and decisions.

### Create a friendly environment:

- Seek out families' ideas about what would feel welcoming to them.
- Provide adult furniture, a parent lounge, and invitations to visit.

## REFLECT ON FAMILIES AS PARTNERS

**When you partnered with families in the past, what was successful and why?**

**What has been challenging in your work with families?**

**What would you like to improve?**

**What is your new goal in building relationships with families?**

**What resources will help you reach your goal?**

For more information, contact us at: [NCQTL@UW.EDU](mailto:NCQTL@UW.EDU) or 877-731-0764.

This document was prepared for the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families, Office of Head Start, by the National Center on Quality Teaching and Learning under Grant # 90HC0002 in collaboration with the National Center on Parent, Family and Community Engagement under Grant #90HC0003.

SPRING 2013