



Collaborating with Transportation Services to Serve ELLs

Ideas for Transportation Services

Bus drivers and bus assistants play an important role in building partnerships with families. In many programs, family members may see the transportation staff more than they see the classroom and other program staff.

In Practice

Here are some ideas for transportation staff to use in building relationships with the families and children:

1. If you do not speak a family's home language, learn how to pronounce the children's and parent's names correctly.
2. If you do not speak a family's home language, learn a few key phrases to use with the families and children, such as greetings and safety comments.
3. Review the ideas of "parallel talk", "self talk", and "expansion" so that you can provide more language stimulation to the children.
4. Review the topics of "open-ended questions" and "wh-questions" so that you can ask the children questions that they will feel comfortable responding to.
5. Learn about the cultures of the families and focus on overall cultural sensitivity, recognizing the issue of stereotyping. Some of the HELLP Guide activities may be used for training exercises with the staff. You can begin this process by thinking and talking about your own cultures and family practices.
6. Post transportation rules in English *and* in the family's home language. Provide transportation notices in the family's home language.

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7. If you do not speak a family's home language, develop plans for using:

- » more gestures
- » more facial expressions
- » simple and slower English phrases
- » objects and pictures when conversing with children or teaching concepts
- » songs, poems and rhymes in the family's languages

8. If English is used for guidance and for teaching by bus aides or other transportation specialists (take out), use drawings or photos to present bus routines or daily agendas to children regarding transportation topics.

Prepared by HELLP program participants.

