

Celebrating Good Times

Linda

Head Start/Early Head Start Director



I'm a Head Start/Early Head Start director. I recently discovered that despite all of my staff's good efforts, children's attendance is down. At an all-staff meeting, we reviewed the data together, and created a goal about improving attendance. I asked each person to think about how he or she could make a contribution that will help the program reach its goal.

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Omar

Bus Driver



First thought:

"Sorry, I can't help. All I can do is get the ones that want to be here to the center on time."

On second thought...

"I'll talk to the bus monitor about greeting parents and children with an extra big smile. We can set a welcoming tone right from the start. And when children come back after being absent, we can let them know that we missed them—and so did their teachers and friends. I can keep as close as possible to my pick up schedule and that way I am a role model for promptness. Lastly, if I am late,

I can explain why so parents know that I respect their time. You know, I never realized that I play an important part in improving attendance. I wonder what how else I can help our program reach its goals."

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Sue

Family Services Manager



First thought:

"I wish it were different. I've tried to call some of these parents five times but they never seem to be home."

On second thought...

"I'm going to remember to talk about the importance of attendance in my initial conversations with families. In fact, maybe we can revise our orientation and enrollment protocols so I'll be sure to talk about it. I'm going to remind parents not only at the beginning of the year, but throughout the year, and let them know that I notice that their children are coming to school more

frequently. You know, since I work with families, I know that I have an important role in making sure that they understand how important it is to send their children to school every day. But I want to think about how I contribute to our other goals that may seem less directly related to my job as a family service worker."

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Georgia

Health Services



First thought:

"Sometimes our attendance is down because parents keep their children home from school when they're sick."

On second thought...

"I wonder if there are things I could do to make sure our children stay healthy so they don't have a reason to stay home. Maybe it's time to do training again with children and staff on hand washing and sneezing into their elbows to cut down on the spread of disease. I can also train parents on things like having good sleep

routines. There's such a strong and obvious connection between good health and attendance. But I wonder if all of our other staff—the kitchen staff, teachers, our facilities manager, for example, see how they contribute to our reaching this goal—and our other goals as well."