Family-Centered Practice: First Thoughts

Take another look at the chart below on the beliefs and actions of family-centered practice. Use the third column to record your thoughts and ideas of how to incorporate this philosophy into your program.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Beliefs</th>
<th>Actions</th>
<th>First Thoughts</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Families are the most important decision-makers in a child’s life.</td>
<td>• I learn about families’ ideas and preferences.</td>
<td>• Establish and maintain ongoing communication with families throughout the year.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• I provide choices in programming.</td>
<td>• Provide multiple opportunities for families to learn about their children’s work.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• I involve families in decision-making.</td>
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<td>Families are unique and their differences enrich our programs.</td>
<td>• I honor and respect diversity.</td>
<td>• Incorporate the families theme in centers and activities throughout the year.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• I involve all the important people in a child’s life.</td>
<td>• Provide opportunities for families to participate in program activities.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• I engage and involve families.</td>
<td>• Invite family members to come observe in the program.</td>
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<td>• I develop responsive and reciprocal relationships.</td>
<td>• Include toys and materials in centers that reflect diversity.</td>
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<td>• I represent families in our programs.</td>
<td>• Invite families in the program to share their traditions, food, and customs.</td>
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<td>• Make sure posters and materials in the program do not portray stereotypical images of individuals or groups of people.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Families are resilient. | • I learn about families’ strengths, needs, and circumstances.  
| | • I connect families with resources.  
| | • I build families’ strengths.  
| | • Provide opportunities for families to get to know one another; for example, through a family night.  
| | • Introduce family members to each other as they drop off or pick up their children.  
| | • Provide information about community events that families can attend.  
| Families are central to development and learning. | • I share information with families.  
| | • I listen to families.  
| | • I view families as their child’s first teacher.  
| | • I respect families’ expertise about their child.  
| | • Share information with families about development.  
| | • Ask families questions about their child.  
| Families are our partners. | • I use respectful, responsive, and two-way communication.  
| | • I reach out to families.  
| | • I involve families in all aspects of our program.  
| | • Use a variety of ways to communicate with families in the program (meetings, phone, email).  
| | • Ask open-ended questions.  

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