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 school-age program.

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