



A Foundation of Trust

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INSTRUCTIONS

This handout was designed for use with the video “Early Essentials: Building Relationships,” presented by the Head Start Early Childhood Learning and Knowledge Center. The questions and activities in this handout could be used in a work session (e.g., professional learning community, professional development session), for individual coaching, or for self-reflection.

Goals

- ◆ Identify the importance of building positive relationships with families in your classroom and how those relationships can help strengthen teacher-child relationships.
- ◆ Assess your current practices and identify strengths and areas for growth.
- ◆ Explore strategies to build connection and establish trust with families and plan how you can integrate these into your current practice.

Activity

- ◆ Before watching, use the prompting questions to reflect on your current practices and beliefs about building positive relationships and engaging families.
- ◆ Watch the video.
- ◆ After watching, use the remaining questions below to guide your reflection on family engagement and building positive relationships with families.
- ◆ Develop and implement a plan to build positive relationships with families and adjust as needed.

Relationships provide the pathway for children to grow and develop.

Tammy Mann, President and CEO of Campagna Center

PROMPTING QUESTIONS

Complete before watching the video:

- ◆ Think about the children in your classroom who you feel most and least connected. Consider your relationships with their families. Do you feel more or less connected to them? In what ways is your relationship with those children affected by your relationships with their families?

REFLECTION QUESTIONS

Complete after watching the video:

- ◆ What caught your attention from the video? What made that fact, excerpt, or example meaningful to you?

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- ◆ When sensitive or difficult situations arise in the classroom, a foundation of trust with families can help us resolve challenges quickly and collaboratively. Similarly, this trust helps families feel comfortable sharing information about their lives at home or challenges they face which can help you support children's social-emotional needs. Think of a time you had to have a difficult conversation with a family.
 - How do you think your relationship with them may have influenced the way the conversation went?
 - If the relationship with the family wasn't strong, how might it impact the relationship with the child or reaction to the situation?

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- ◆ This video highlights the need to build a bond of trust and be intentional in your interactions with families in your program. Think again about the children and families you feel most and least connected to (see prompting question above).
 - Has the video changed your opinion or perspective? If so, how?
 - If there are families that you find it more challenging to establish this bond of trust why might do you think this may be?
 - ◆ Plan to intentionally build your relationship with a family to whom you aren't as connected.
 - Choose one concrete way to begin to connect with the family.
 - Identify what resources or supports you need to start this plan.
 - Implement your plan for at least one week and reflect on your interactions and feelings to understand how the relationship is changing. Adjust your plan as needed to continue building your connection.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Learn more about how building positive relationships with families support children:

- ◆ **Source:** NAEYC
- ◆ **Article:** Principles of Effective Family Engagement
- ◆ **Link:** <https://www.naeyc.org/resources/topics/family-engagement/principles>
- ◆ **Description:** In this article you will read about key practices that engage families in their child's early learning. As you read the principles outlined by NAEYC take a moment to reflect upon which practices you may already be using and which ones you would like to integrate into your classroom.



- ◆ **Source:** Zero to Three
- ◆ **Article:** "How Partnering with Your Child's Caregiver Supports Healthy Development"
- ◆ **Link:** <https://www.zerotothree.org/resources/292-how-partnering-with-your-child-s-caregiver-supports-healthy-development>
- ◆ **Description:** In this podcast, Dr. Jerlean Daniel describes characteristics of quality childcare and highlights how interactions with families are at the heart of quality programs. This podcast focuses on how families and childcare providers can work together to promote young children's development. Consider how you can use this podcast to support families and reflect on your own practice and relationships with families.



- ◆ **Source:** Resources for Early Learning
- ◆ **Module:** "Build Relationships with Families"
- ◆ **Link:** <http://resourcesforearlylearning.org/educators/module/20/13/61/>
- ◆ **Description:** In this online module, you will explore the importance of building relationships with families and how a positive relationship between educators and families can impact a child's learning. After completing the module, you can reflect on what you do to build positive relationships and also strategies you want to incorporate into your practice moving forward.

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