

Being Responsive to Children and Families: *Engaging Families*

Use these ideas and questions to build on what you've learned and extend your practice.

THINK ABOUT IT!

- **Self-Reflection**
 Use these questions to think about your own practice.
- **Reflect with Others**
 Supervisors, directors, coaches, and teachers/providers can be reflective partners.
- **The Power of Practice**
 Invite a colleague to join you; observe or record each other and share ideas.

REFLECTIVE QUESTIONS

- What do I know about families' interest and availability to participate in the program? How can I learn more about how families would like to contribute?
- How can I learn about the preferences, hopes, and dreams families have for their children?
- What small changes can I make in my practice to better support families' preferences, hopes, and dreams?
- What decisions can families help me make in the classroom or program?
- How comfortable am I engaging families as co-teachers?
- How can I stretch myself to find creative ways for families to actively participate in children's learning?

TRY IT OUT!

Think about your effort to engage families in your classroom or family child care home.

- Reflect on the ways you engage families as co-supporters, co-decision-makers, and co-teachers.
- Brainstorm additional ideas for how you can engage families as co-supporters, co-decision-makers, and co-teachers.

	How do I engage families as ...?	What else can I do to engage families as ...?
Co-supporters Learn from families about their preferences, hopes, and dreams for their children.		
Co-decision-makers Collaborate with families in making decisions about learning goals for their child and the curriculum.		
Co-teachers Offer families various opportunities to actively participate in learning experiences.		

How Did It Go?

After filling out the table, reflect on your family engagement practices. What are your strengths? What are your areas for improvement?

What Next?

Put these ideas into practice. Choose one idea you listed in the "What else can I do ...?" column to try out in the next week. Continue this exercise until you offer a wide range of opportunities to partner with families. Check out the next bundle, *Enhancing Interactions with Young Dual Language Learners*, to learn key strategies to support the development of dual language learners.