Building Authentic Relationships with Diverse Families
...family engagement has emerged as a critical strategy used especially for supporting positive outcomes for students from low-income and immigrant communities. Yet practitioners receive little training on how to effectively engage families.”

The Early Age Spectrum in San Mateo & Santa Clara Counties
Kendra Fehrer
Knowing Your Families

• What information do you try to collect to “know your families”?

• How do you gather this information?
Outcomes

Participants will/ will be able to:

- Explore the importance of incorporating culture in Early Learning classrooms to build authentic relationships with culturally diverse families
- Define the three levels of culture
- Discuss the teacher’s role in building effective relationships with culturally diverse families
Agenda

- Connector
- Overview
- Defining Culture
- Who Am I?
- Power of Inside Out Work
- Role of the Teacher in Building Effective Relationships with Culturally Diverse Families
- Closure
Norms

- Equity of Voice
- Active Listening
- Respect for All Perspectives
- Safety and Confidentiality
- Respectful Use of Electronics
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1. Stay engaged</th>
<th>2. Speak your truth</th>
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<td>3. Experience discomfort</td>
<td>4. Expect and accept non-closure</td>
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Building Authentic Relationships
Building Authentic Relationships with Diverse Families

How do you build authentic relationships with culturally diverse families?
Building Authentic Relationships with Diverse Families

1. What do authentic relationships look, sound and feel like?

2. Why is it important?
What’s Working? What are Challenges?

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<th>What’s Working?</th>
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Reflection

What’s one challenge you will try new ideas to overcome?
Consider this...

…”if a parent can develop a strong relationship with their child’s early learning program, it will give them “the confidence and skills” to be involved in their child’s education throughout their school careers.”

Linda Halgunseth, University of Connecticut
Appreciating Diversity Among Families

- Structure
- Temperament
- Life experiences
- Language
- Economic Status
- Culture
"When schools acknowledge the relevance of children's homes and cultures and promote family involvement, they can develop a supportive environment for learning through meaningful activities that engage and empower families."

(Ramey & Ramey, 1999; Rhodes, Enz, & LaCount, 2006)
Defining the Importance of Cultural Diversity
What does the word CULTURE mean to you?

Culture as it turns out, is the way that every brain makes sense of the world. That is why everyone, regardless of race or ethnicity, has a culture.

-Zaretta Hammond

Culture: Quick Write

Write down as many words that come to mind when you think of culture. Include one word or phrase per sticky note.
Three Levels of Culture

Surface Culture (leaves)

Shallow Culture (trunk)

Deep Culture (roots)

Three Levels of Culture

Surface culture (leaves): observable and concrete elements of culture such as food, dress, music, and holidays

Shallow culture (trunk): Unspoken rules around everyday social interactions and norms, such as courtesy, attitudes toward elders, nature of friendship, concepts of time, personal space between people, nonverbal communications, rules about eye contact, or appropriate touching

Deep culture (roots): unconscious assumptions, view of good or bad, ethics, spirituality, health, theories of group harmony

Three Levels of Culture

As a table group, sort the post-its you wrote into the three levels of culture:

1. Surface
2. Shallow
3. Deep

2018 TK
CONFEREN
LOS ANGELES

Who Am I?
Article: Distorted Vision

1. Sit in triads. Identify a timekeeper
2. Each person identifies one “most” significant idea from the text and underlines or highlights it in the article.
3. The first person reads what “struck him or her the most” from the article. Explain why. (2 min)
4. Each person responds to the quote and what the presenter said (1 min each)
5. Person that started has the ‘Final Word’ to respond to the other responses. (2 min)
6. Repeat until each person has had the opportunity to begin.
Who Am I? Cultural Drawing

**Draw** yourself through a culture lens.

**Share with a Partner:**

- What is important to you about this aspect of yourself?
- What makes you proud?
- What might give you pain?
How do you think culture plays a role with your student’s families?

How is it influenced by the groups you identified in your portrait?
Culture is...

- Language
- World View
- Thoughts
- Values
- Behaviors
- Art, food, clothes
- Manners of interacting
- Spirituality
- Courtesies
- Communication styles
The Role of the Teacher in Building Effective Relationships with Culturally Diverse Families
Messages

You are always welcome here.

You are invited to contribute to the program.

You are competent, and we can learn from you.

Your ideas are valuable, and you have an important role to play.

You are entitled to understand what is happening in the program.
Exchanging Information with Families

TABLE TALK/RECORD 1 IDEA PER POST-IT

How do you give information to families?

How do you receive information from families?

How might you make sure your communication with families balanced and two-way?
Daily vs. Formal

- Daily Exchanges
- Formal Communication
The Challenge

• Communicating with the parents is more important than ever

• Families are harder to reach

• Plenty of options for reaching them – but that doesn’t always make your job easier!
Technology Options

- Text message       - Voicemail
- Email               - Website              - Blog
- Facebook group      - Google

It depends…

• You have to get to know your families and what reaches them best.
• But the answer is almost always going to be more than one
Text messages to help you prepare your child for kindergarten!

All parents want to prepare their children for kindergarten but many run out of ideas. Ready4K! can help!

Ready4K! text messages include FUN FACTS and EASY TIPS that are scientifically-proven to help children do better in school.

To sign up for Ready4K! messages text “Ready4K” to 313131
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<th>Name</th>
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<td>Child’s name</td>
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<td>(w)</td>
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<td>Email</td>
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**Preferred form of contact:**

- Phone
- Email
- In-Person
- Text message

Are you able to receive images via your phone plan? Yes  No

**Best time of day to reach you:**

- Morning
- Afternoon
- Evening
What’s one new idea you will try out in communicating with families?

Write it down!
Closure
Outcomes

Participants will/ will be able to:

• Explore the importance of incorporating culture in Early Learning classrooms to build authentic relationships with culturally diverse families

• Define the three levels of culture

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Actively Engaging Families
BUMPER STICKER

Complete this sentence to create a bumper sticker:

*If you want families to be engaged,*
___________________________________________
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