Module Home



**Outline­**

**Family Engagement**:

Collaborating with Families of Students with Disabilities

* Module Description: This module—a revision of Collaborating with Families, which was originally developed in cooperation with the PACER Center—addresses the importance of engaging the families of students with disabilities in their child’s education. It highlights some of the key factors that affect these families and outlines some practical ways to build relationships and create opportunities for involvement (est. completion time: 1 hour).

Challenge

* Video: Friends, my name is **Holly Brienza**. I’m a teacher at Elmwood…

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Initial Thoughts

* What do educators need to understand about families of children with disabilities?
* How can educators engage these families?

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Perspectives & Resources

* Module Objectives
* Understand the importance of family engagement
* Be aware of the actions educators can take to engage families
* Recognize some of the challenges that families who have children with disabilities may face
* Identify practical ways to build positive relationships with parents of children with disabilities and to create opportunities for them to be involved

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* Page 1: The Importance of Family Engagement
* In the social and academic development of children, both…
* This relationship between schools and families is… [bullet points]
* Research Shows
* That said, in order to engage families, educators… [bullet points]
* For Your Information
  + Link: Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) [definition]
  + Link: Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) [definition]
  + Link: individualized education program (IEP) team [definition]
* Specifically, these pages will discuss… [bullet points]

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* Page 2: Emotional Reactions to Disability
* To begin the process of getting to know families, educators…
* Range of Emotions
  + Emotion/Examples of how the parent might display the… [table]
  + Audio: Listen to Luz Hernandez describe the emotions she has…
  + In fact, many families find that their child with… [bullet points]
  + Audio: Listen to Aubri Girardeau describe the joy her child…
* Supporting Families
  + They can do this by… [bullet points]
  + Activity
    - Link: The Journey: A Parent Comes to Terms with… [PDF]

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* Page 3: Additional Roles of Families
* Another consideration educators should keep in mind…
* These additional roles may… [bullet points]
* Audio: Listen as Luz Hernandez discusses the roles she assumed…
* Role/Description [table]
* Audio: Listen to Anne Henderson talk about the roles of families…
* For Your Information
  + Link: Listen to Aubri Girardeau talk about how her son…
* Supporting Families
  + To support these families, educators can… [bullet points]

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* Page 4: Stressors of Daily Living
* In addition to coping with emotional issues and additional roles…
* Lack of Support [drop-down menu]
  + Link: respite care [definition]
  + Audio: Now listen as Luz Hernandez talks about…
* Financial Struggles [drop-down menu]
* Healthcare Concerns [drop-down menu]
* Accessibility Issues [drop-down menu]
  + Accessibility Barrier/Description [table]
  + For Your Information
    - Link: How to Break Down Communication… [web page]
    - Link: English Language Learners in Special… [web page]
* Supporting Families
  + Educators can provide support by… [bullet points]
  + For Your Information
    - Link: Center for Parent Information and… [website]
    - Link: PACER Center [website]

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* Page 5: Build Positive Relationships
* Recall that to successfully achieve family engagement, educators…
* Create a Welcoming Environment [drop-down menu]
  + Link: Listen to Anne Henderson emphasize the importance of…
* Acknowledge Strengths [drop-down menu]
  + Audio: Listen as Aubri Girardeau discusses some of the ways…
* Build Trust
  + For Your Information
    - Link: Working Effectively with Families from Diverse… [PDF]
    - Link: Three Ways to Engage Parents in High… [web page]
  + Audio: Listen to Anne Henderson talk about some other factors…
* Recognize Parents as Ultimate Decision-Makers
  + Link: age of majority [definition]
  + Audio: Listen to Aubri Girardeau talk about her experience as…
  + Audio: Listen to Anne Henderson talk about parents as…

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* Page 6: Meaningfully Involve Families
* To encourage family encouragement, educators should…
* Category/Description and Examples [table]
  + Link: Click for tips on communicating [drop-down menu]
* Audio: Listen as Aubri Girardeau describes how she is involved…

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* Page 7: Involving Families During Distance Learning
* In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, educators…
* Link: synchronous [definition]
* Link: asynchronous [definition]
* Link: related service providers [definition]
* Link: free appropriate public education (FAPE) [definition]
* Maintain Open Lines of Communication [drop-down menu]
  + For Your Information
* Provide Needed Support [drop-down menu]
  + Did You Know?
    - Link: Parents: Supporting Learning During the COVID-19 Pandemic [IRIS Module]
  + Area of Need/Examples of Support [table]
* Promote Shared Decision-Making Around Changes… [drop-down menu]
* For Your Information
  + Link: Questions and Answers on Providing Services to… [PDF]
  + Link: Virtual IEP Meeting Tip Sheets [web page]
  + Link: Reflections about Individualizing Supports for… [web page]

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* Page 8: References & Additional Resources
* Suggested module citation
* References
* Additional Resources
* Page 9: Credits
* Module Developers
* Module Production Team

Wrap Up

* Summary of the module
* Audio: Listen to Luz Hernandez share some words of wisdom…
* Revisit your Initial Thoughts responses

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Assessment

* Take some time now to answer the following questions.

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You Have Completed This Module

* Give Us Your Feedback
  + Link: Module Feedback Form
* Professional Development Hours
  + Link: IRIS PD Options
* Related Resources [link]