

Creating a Caring Community

Tips for Educators

Learning with Families

A caring early learning community provides a safe, inviting, and supportive space for children and families. This involves creating an environment where staff and families engage in open and mutually respectful partnerships to promote positive outcomes for children and their families. The strategies below can help you accomplish that goal in your program.

Learn about the families' values, beliefs, and lived experiences:

- Encourage families to talk about their cultural practices and languages.
- Build a positive relationship with families by asking about their hopes and dreams.
- Invite families to share their child-rearing and teaching practices as well as expectations for their child's development and learning.

Reflect on your own background, beliefs, and expectations with families:

- Reflect on how your beliefs, values, and attitudes may be similar to or different from families in your program. Consider how such differences might affect your relationship with family members.
- Be prepared to challenge your assumptions and look for biases in current teaching and program practices.

Engage with families in ways that honor and affirm their cultural and individual identities and strengths:

- Be open to learning about different perspectives and life experiences.
- Find sensitive, responsive ways to manage differences when working with families.
- Work together to shape practices that promote positive child and family outcomes.

