



Quality ChildCare

For Registered Home-Based Providers

LEARNING TO GROW ★ WINDWARD COMMUNITY COLLEGE

Vol. IV, No. 8

10 Hallmarks of Quality Child Care

- ★ Build trusting relationships
- ★ Provide consistent care
- ★ Support children's health
- ★ Provide a safe environment
- ★ Provide positive guidance
- ★ Provide a language-rich environment
- ★ Foster curiosity and development through play
- ★ Individualize care and learning activities
- ★ **Partner with parents**
- ★ Pursue personal and professional growth

This Month's Hallmarks of Quality Child Care

Partner with Parents

Strategies for Partnering with Families

Penn State Better Kid Care states that “Strong family engagement is critical, not supplemental, in promoting children’s healthy development, learning, and wellness.” Research shows that collaborating with families contributes to positive outcomes for children and families. New research about the brain and learning suggests that families’ involvement in children’s learning and development impacts lifelong health, developmental, and academic outcomes. Your engagement with the children’s families will support family members as they teach, nurture, and advocate for their children.

Family child care providers are in a unique position to support strong family engagement because in family child care:

- Children can enjoy the security of having a single consistent provider over a period of years.
- Families can have more than one of their children enrolled, which decreases their burden of drop-offs and pick-ups at multiple sites.
- Families see the same provider every day, so you become a trusted source of support and information.
- Providers play a key role in promoting children’s social-emotional, cognitive, language, and behavioral development.
- Home language, cultural background, neighborhood, community environment, and experiences may be commonly shared by the family and the provider.

This newsletter will present information on:

- The Family Partnership Guidelines adopted by the State of Hawai’i in 2013.
- Strategies for implementing family partnerships.



Hawai'i Family Partnership Guidelines for Early Childhood Settings

These guidelines, which can be implemented in any child care setting, include six key principles that promote actions practitioners can take to engage more effectively with families. They are:

1. **Welcoming all families.** *Families are active participants in the life of the program. They are welcomed, valued and connected to each other, to providers and to what children are learning and doing throughout the day.*
2. **Communicating effectively.** *Families and providers engage in effective reciprocal and ongoing communication to support the success of the children in their care.*
3. **Supporting success.** *Families and providers continuously partner to support learning and healthy development, both in the home and in the program. Families and providers create or find opportunities on an ongoing basis to strengthen their knowledge and skills to do so effectively.*
4. **Speaking up for every child.** *Providers support families in being advocates for their own and other's children to ensure that all children are treated fairly and have access to lifelong learning opportunities that support their success.*
5. **Sharing decision making.** *Families and providers are partners in decisions that affect children and families. Together, they inform, influence, and create policies, practices and programs that benefit children and result in improved child health and learning outcomes.*
6. **Partnering with community.** *Families and providers partner with community members and organizations to increase understanding of, and access to, resources, services and programs.*



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Defining families

Family structure has changed over the last 30 years. The way we define family is influenced by multiple factors, including our culture, values, and life circumstances. What we define as “family” influences our interactions and impacts:

- How we welcome families
- The environment we create
- The communication we have with families
- Young children’s experiences – how they see themselves as learners and people who live and work with others
- How we talk with children about their families.

When there are differences between our beliefs and those of a child’s family, this can create a barrier or a challenge in our relationships. It’s important to acknowledge that families come in all shapes and forms and most families want what’s best for their children.



Strategies for implementing family partnership

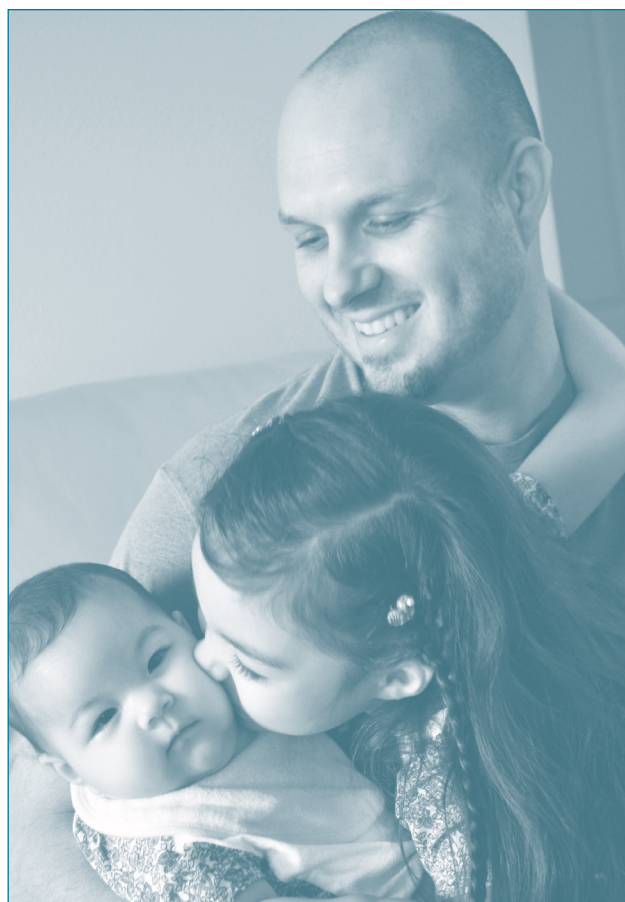
As a FCC provider, you play an important role in the lives of children, their parents and other family members. You may already be doing much of what is required to build family partnerships. However, if you are not sure where to begin, start by thinking about your relationships and ask yourself the following questions:

- Do I respect all families?
- Do I listen and am I responsive?
- Do I acknowledge and support family competence?

The following are some ideas to strengthen the ways you partner with families.

Practice being respectful.

- Listen carefully.
- Learn what families want their children to learn.
- Consider multiple perspectives.
- Maintain confidentiality.
- Learn about communication efforts that are different than yours.
- Avoid negative assumptions.
- Develop positive attitudes about families.



Practice being responsive

- Use eye contact and welcoming body language.
- Reflect on what others communicate to you.
- Communicate clearly.
- Think critically.
- Pause and collect your thoughts when challenged.
- Respond thoughtfully.

Acknowledge and support family competence

- Point out and praise their efforts.
- Share resources to help families understand their child.
- Practice reciprocity (collaborate, plan, and partner).
- Include families in goal-setting for their child.

Citations:

Nolte, S. (2017). Training of Trainers. Building family partnerships: Engaging families to support positive outcomes for keiki. Unpublished training document.

Penn State Better Kid Care (2017). Family child care: A unique role in supporting family engagement. On-line training module. [Available on-line April 5, 2018] <https://extension.psu.edu/programs/betterkidcare/lessons/fcc-unique-role>

State of Hawai'i (2013). Family Partnership Guidelines for Early Childhood Settings. [Available on-line April 5, 2018] http://p3hawaii.org/sites/default/files/pdfs/FPG_2013.pdf



Reflection Sheet, Award Book, and Training Certificates

- Providers who fill out the caregiver's reflection sheet and return it by the posted deadline to the Learning to Grow Program are *guaranteed* a children's book in return. A postage-paid envelop is provided.
- Providers who thoughtfully complete the reflection sheet **question #5** can be awarded a certificate indicating one hour of training completed. Training hours will align with the topic areas required to meet DHS requirements.
- Reflection sheets do not need to be returned by the due date in order to earn the certificate. However, the supply of award books is limited and after the due date, award books will be sent only as available.
- Indicate on Question #8 if you would like to receive free technical assistance or support related to a child care issue.



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