

Suspending Expulsions: Engaging and Supporting Families

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spring
into action

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Introductions and Overview

- 🍃 Why are you here?
- 🍃 Today's Agenda: Engaging and Supporting Families
 - 🍃 Prevent Expulsion
 - 🍃 Support Children and Families
 - 🍃 Resources for Struggling Families



Feeding the Piggy Bank



Why do we engage families?

- 🌿 Mutual support
- 🌿 Understand individual needs of child and family
- 🌿 When parents and caregivers feel supported, children are more relaxed and ready to learn
- 🌿 When times are hard, the relationship will hold
- 🌿 **Expulsion Prevention**



How do we do this?

- 🍃 Initial Contact and Every Day
- 🍃 Casual Approaches
- 🍃 Formal Systems



What does family engagement look like?

- 🍃 Developmental Screening at Orientation with regular follow ups for ALL children
- 🍃 All About Me/Family Based Activities
- 🍃 Information Sharing at Drop Off/Pick Up
- 🍃 Use of Technology and Social Media

Parent Engagement Activities

- 🍃 Home visits and parent-teacher conferences
- 🍃 Planning with families for school transitions
- 🍃 Leadership opportunities: committees, policy development, event planning, etc.
- 🍃 Access to comprehensive services parenting supports



Who Are Our Families?

- 🌿 Diverse and Individual Needs
- 🌿 Challenges
- 🌿 Skills and Resiliencies
- 🌿 Complex Needs
 - 🌿 Homelessness
 - 🌿 Child Welfare Involvement
 - 🌿 Immigration challenges
 - 🌿 Poverty/Deep Poverty
 - 🌿 Teen parents
 - 🌿 Disabilities

Engaging and Supporting Families with Complex Needs

- 🍃 Identification
- 🍃 Respond to practical family needs
- 🍃 Remove barriers
- 🍃 Engage in strategic collaborations
- 🍃 Consider need behind behavior
 - 🍃 Behaviors can often be functional
 - 🍃 Both parents and children!

Tools for the Program

For children/families

- ✔ Validate **feelings**
- ✔ Offer choices
- ✔ Give space
- ✔ Redirection and connection
- ✔ Adapt environment
 - ✔ Quiet/safe space
 - ✔ Open snack table
- ✔ Visual timers
- ✔ Picture schedules

For caregivers

- ✔ Remain calm—set the tone
- ✔ Take a break
- ✔ Self-care and self-reflection
- ✔ Scripts
- ✔ Behavior logs, developmental screening, sensory checklists, etc.
 - ✔ Identify and remove triggers
 - ✔ Understand child needs
- ✔ Embrace creative solutions

Key Partners

- Child and Family Connections (EI)
- School District-- special education, McKinney-Vento
- Food pantries
- Faith community
- Legal aid
- Mental health agencies
- Public assistance agencies
- Public Health Department
- Housing/homeless service agencies
- Crisis services

Resources

- 🍃 Caregiver Connections
- 🍃 Early Intervention
- 🍃 Chicago Child Find
- 🍃 Ages and Stages Questionnaires
- 🍃 Parenting Resources and Supports
 - 🍃 Neighborhood Parents Network
 - 🍃 Family Focus
 - 🍃 Metropolitan Family Services
 - 🍃 Mujeres Latinas en Accion

Thank You!

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