

Agenda – day 4

Theme 1: An introduction to Parenting work

Theme 2: Engaging and communicating with parents

Theme 3: Sharing information and understanding parenting

Theme 4: Safeguarding and child development

Theme 5: Integrated working

Theme 6: Supporting parents involvement in their child's learning

Theme 7: Supporting school attendance and inclusion



Learning Outcomes

At the end of this session, participants will:

- Know the range of likely partners and existing links
- Understand the challenges of making and maintaining links
- Know what makes brokerage effective
- Understand the roles and responsibilities of other agencies



Activity 1

Who might we work with – when, why and how?

1. Split into four groups. Think of all the statutory, voluntary and private sector services who are able to offer support to parents in your area.
2. Write each service on a individual post-it.
3. Categorise the services into those you are likely to work with often (eg once a week or more; sometimes (eg once a term); occasionally (eg for specific individuals) and place on flipchart.
4. Move around the room and look at the other lists. Are there lots of similarities? Are there any agencies your group didn't think of? Are there any agencies you have never heard of?
5. In your group now choose one practitioner and discuss:
 1. Why might they need to work with them? For what purpose and to support which issues/individual?
 2. How might they set up and manage a relationship?
 3. How might they support parents to link with them?
6. Provide brief feedback to the rest of the group.



Exploring and using existing links

Type of involvement	Examples
Parenting	Providing housing, health, nutrition, safety; Parenting skills in parent-child interactions; Home conditions to support study; Information to help schools know child
Communicating	School / home and home / school communication
Volunteering	In school help in classrooms and events
Teaching at home	Help with homework; Help with educational choices / options
Decision making	Membership of PTA / governors
Collaborating with the community	Contributions to school



The challenges of making and maintaining links


Parental factors:

- Unaware of their significance to their child's learning
- Lacking skills, insight and knowledge to support their child's learning
- Ill-equipped to cope with authority due to their own poor experiences
- Apprehensive of any contact with agencies
- Lacking in language and other social skills to engage with formal agencies
- See no value in formal education

Agency factors:

- Bureaucracy
- Time and timing
- Formality
- Policies
- Unwelcoming
- Prescriptive

Other factors, eg.

- Work
 - Poverty
 - Addiction
 - Homelessness
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Activity 2

Addressing challenges to making and maintaining links

In small groups:

1. In pairs review the challenges on the activity sheets.
2. For each challenge consider:
 - What does the school do currently to address the challenge?
 - What more might be done to address these challenges?
3. Are there any additional challenges in your school?



Brokerage

Effective brokerage is likely to involve:

- always putting the parent at the centre
- developing effective partnerships with other agencies and the community
- working in partnership with the voluntary sector
- setting up networks
- developing knowledge about the services available to young people
- developing knowledge about the roles and responsibilities of other agencies.



Communication between parents and school

- Newsletters
- School profile containing facts and information about the school
- School website containing information about student policies, staffing, calendar, parenting events, and prospectus
- Parental questionnaires
- Attendance certificates
- Individual interim reports
- Individual annual reports.
- Parents' evenings
- Ad hoc comments in planner
- Phone calls
- Letters
- Open evenings
- Parents' association
- Special awards
- Celebratory events
- Social events.

