PDG B-5 TA CENTER

STRATEGIES FOR ENGAGING FAMILIES

Faith Scheibe, Carolina Zamora, & Carla Guidi

April 14, 2021

OBJECTIVES

- Increase state staff knowledge of different approaches to systemic family engagement.
- Learn about four different approaches for promoting family engagement at the state level.
- Learn about the structures created, successes experienced, lessons learned, challenges faced, and hear ideas about future direction from each state on how they are implementing their programs in a mixed delivery system.

AGENDA

- What Research Says - Benefits of Family Engagement
- Overview of 4 Strategies for State Agencies
- State Presentations
  - Connecticut
  - Georgia
  - Kentucky
  - North Carolina
- Panel Questions
- To Continue Your Learning

INCREASING FAMILY ENGAGEMENT IS IMPORTANT

- Families have strong and sustained effects on children's development, learning, and wellness.
- Family well-being is also a strong predictor of children's school readiness.
- States play a critical role in promoting family engagement at the policy and program level.

STRATEGIES FOR STATE AGENCIES TO ENGAGE FAMILIES

1. Parent Advisory Cabinet
2. Family Ambassadors
3. Family Cafés
4. Community Hubs

POLL QUESTION 1

Do you have a statewide parent engagement framework?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No
- ☐ Not Sure

POLL QUESTION 2

Which of the following family engagement activities are you working to employ or improve statewide? (select all that apply)

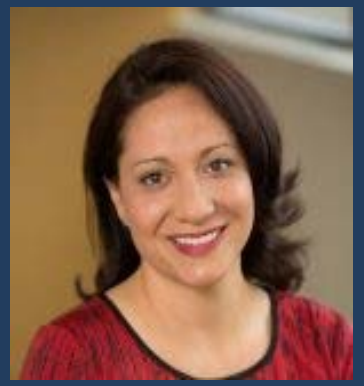
- ☐ Parent Advisory Cabinet
- ☐ Parent Cafés
- ☐ Community Hubs
- ☐ Family Ambassadors
- ☐ Other (please list in chat)
- ☐ I Don't Know

PRESENTERS

Kristen Martin
LMFT Program Administrator for Early Childhood Mental Health, Kentucky Department For Public Health

Susan Adams
Deputy Commissioner Pre-K and Instructional Supports, Georgia Department of Early Care and Learning

Alexandra Morris
State Level Family Engagement Coordinator, Division of Child Development & Early Education, North Carolina Dept of Health & Human Services



Elena Trueworthy
Connecticut Head Start State Collaboration Office Director in the Office of Early Childhood (OEC)

Lorna Thomas-Farquharson
Connecticut Office of Early Childhood (OEC) Program Manager for PDG B-5

1. STATE ROLE IN DEVELOPMENT OF A PARENT ADVISORY CABINET

Connecticut

Connecticut Office of Early Childhood Parent Cabinet

April 14th, 2021

OEC

OEC Parent Cabinet Launching 2021

What is it?

Diverse, parent-led advisory group that partners with OEC to raise family voice and develop equitable family-driven policies, programs, and practices.

Members of the Parent Cabinet will provide guidance on:

- How to improve programs, policies, and laws related to young children and their families
- The needs of families from all backgrounds
- How OEC can form lasting and effective partnerships with families

Mission:

To build connections, listen, and partner with Connecticut families, communities, and OEC to incorporate the expertise of all parents throughout the early childhood system to ensure family-driven, equitable policies and programs

History

The Office of Early Childhood (OEC) Parent Cabinet was co-created with a group of 10 parent leaders from across the state to form a Parent Cabinet Planning Committee.

Models and strategies

The planning committee researched and based their work on various models and approaches.

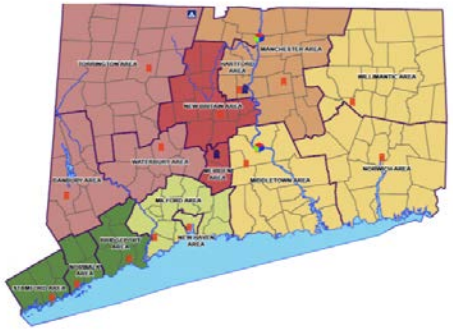
These include:

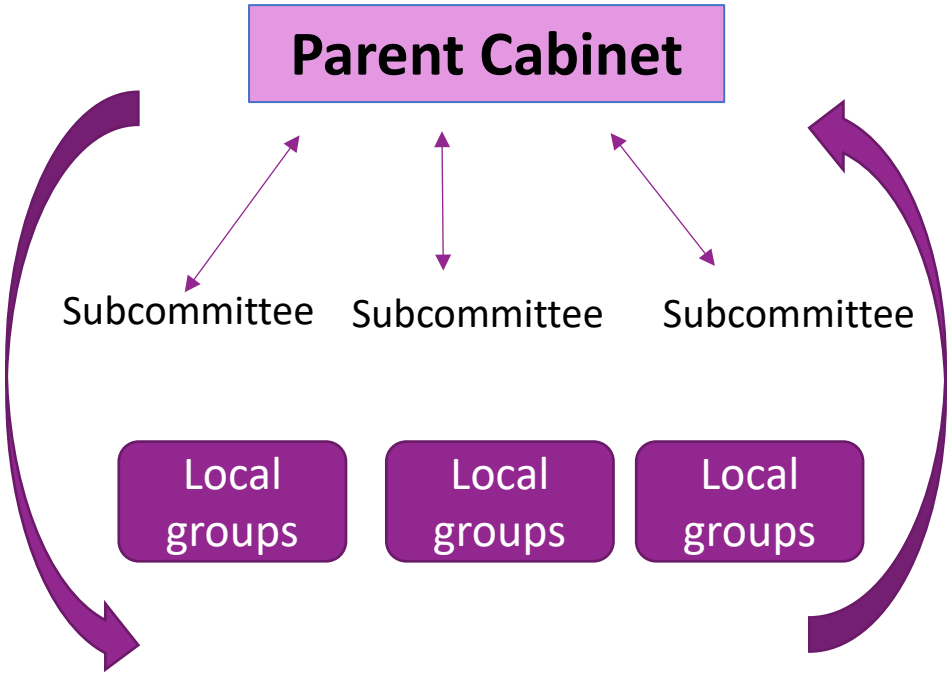
- CT's 2Gen Initiative
- CT's Framework and Definition of Family Engagement
- Head Start Family and Community Engagement
- Manifesto for Race Equity & Parent Leadership in Early Childhood Systems
- Parent Leadership Training Institute

Infrastructure

15 Members total

- 6 regions – 2 reps per region
- 3 at-large seats
- 60% Families connected to OEC
- 40% Other
- 2 year terms





Thank you!

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2. STATE ROLE IN DEVELOPMENT OF FAMILY AMBASSADORS

Georgia

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Family Peer Ambassadors

Georgia Dept of Early Care and Learning
BRIGHT FROM THE START

- Share resources and information at community events
  - Early childhood services
  - Child development
- Promote B-5 topics through social media
  - Received training and social media templates
  - Focus on new Developmental Milestones website
- Participate in community and state level advisory groups and provide feedback to inform policy and practice

development.
decal.ga.gov

Mayra Vélez
5d ·

Defiant behavior is a developmental stage??? But it doesn't just end at 2, that's for sure! development.decal.ga.gov #ActEarlyGA #DECALAmbassador Georgia Department of Early Care and Learning #MilestoneMonday

Jackie Hull Smith
January 29 ·

Go to development.decal.ga.gov to find out more! #ActEarlyGA #DECALAmbassador @brightfromthestart

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#ActEarlyGA
#DECALAmbassador

Next Steps

- Train additional cohort of Ambassadors
- Train a cohort of Lead Ambassadors on Parent Cafes.
  - Provide virtual Cafes on child development

3. STATE ROLE IN HOSTING FAMILY CAFÉS

Kentucky

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KENTUCKY STRENGTHENING FAMILIES℠

Core Concepts Behind Kentucky Parent Café

- FREE parent-led get-togethers.
- Discussion focuses on 6 Protective Factors.
- Identify their strengths, needs, and challenges.
- Gain confidence in their ability to meet their needs and the needs of their children.
- Recognize what they already know and ways that they can support each other.
- Devise new ways to solve problems, find resources, and fulfill family needs.

Contact Information

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Early Childhood Mental Health Program Administrator

Resources
Family Thrive Action Guide
What is Kentucky Strengthening Families?

4. STATE ROLE IN ESTABLISHING COMMUNITY HUBS

North Carolina

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NC Department of Health and Human Services

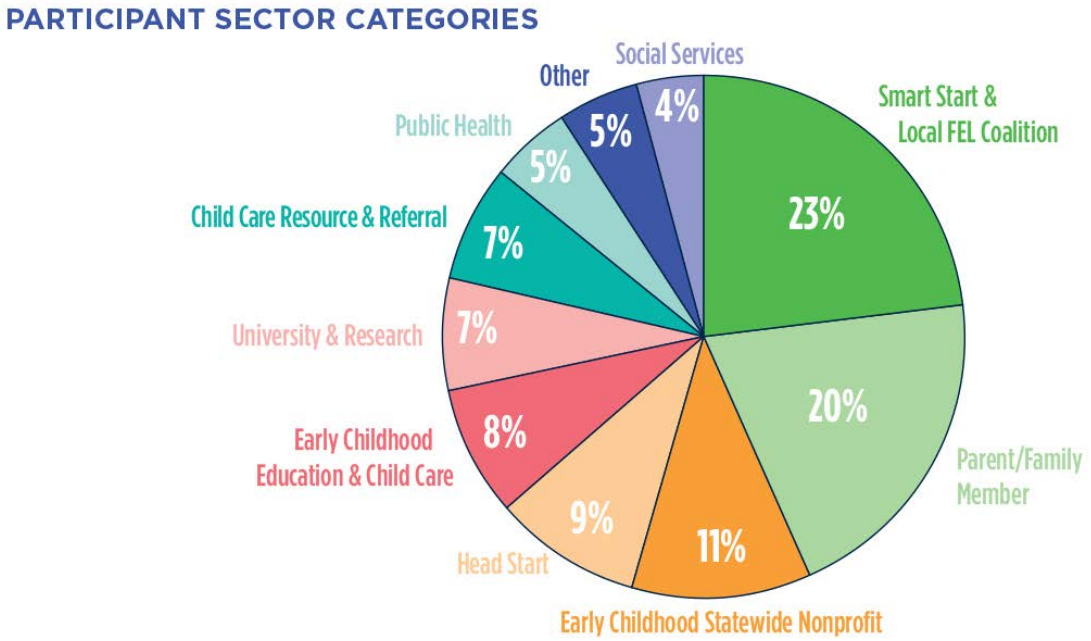
Strengthening Statewide Family Engagement and Leadership in North Carolina

Alexandra Morris, MSW

State Level Family Engagement Coordinator

Family Engagement & Leadership Coalition

- DCDEE and North Carolina Partnership for Children (NCPC) organized a cross-sector group of 74 to design and create a Framework of best practices for strengthening family engagement and leadership in the context of early childhood.

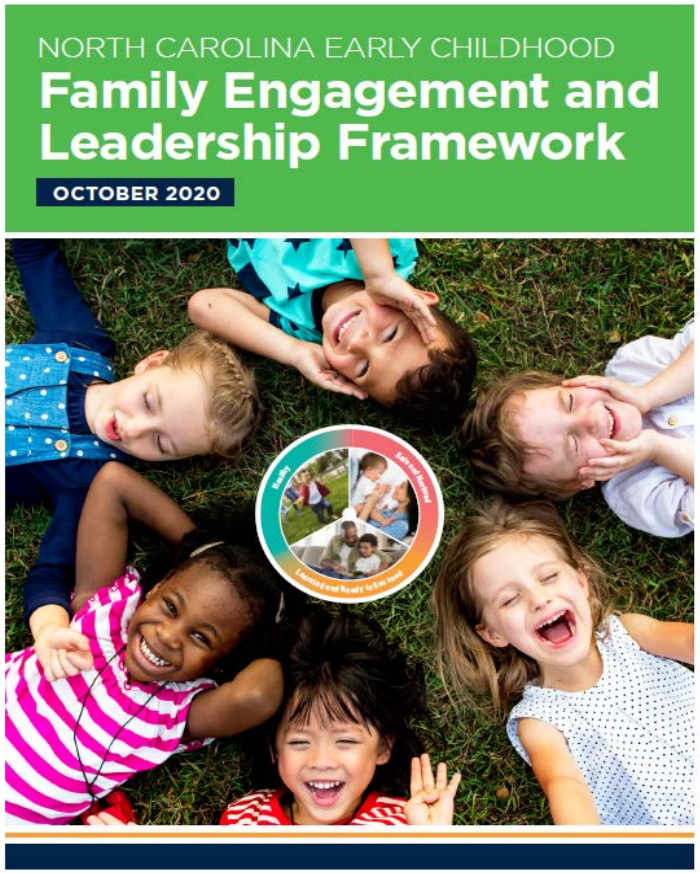


Family Engagement & Leadership Coalition

- Using an inclusive model of community engagement, the Coalition met in a series of six meetings in 2019 to create and endorse the final draft of the North Carolina Framework for Family Engagement and Leadership.
- The Project Leads, with guidance from an Accelerator Team, designed the overall process, planned Coalition meetings with state, local and family representatives, and researched best practices from both within North Carolina and around the country.

Family Engagement & Leadership Framework

- **Family Engagement** is the process of building genuine relationships with families to help children grow and thrive. Family engagement means doing *with*—not *for*—families.
- Guiding Principles
- Conditions for Success:
  - Family Centered
  - Equity Driven
  - Collaborative
  - Transparent
- Systems Components and Opportunities for Action



Resources

- **Family Engagement & Leadership Framework**
- Family Engagement and Leadership Action Guide

For more information, contact:

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QUESTIONS FOR STATE PRESENTERS

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STRATEGIES TO ENGAGE FAMILIES

1. Parent Advisory Cabinet
2. Family Ambassadors
3. Family Cafés
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TO CONTINUE YOUR LEARNING

Research to Practice brief

- How State Leaders Can Promote Meaningful Family Engagement at the State and Program Level

Workgroup

- State Role in Family Engagement
  (starting in April)

Resources

- U.S. Department of Health and Human Services & U.S. Department of Education Policy on Family Engagement the Early Years to the Early Grades

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Office of Child Care

THANK YOU!