


The CalSAC Trainer Network
 Deepening Skills, Growing Leaders

The School-Age Training Project

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Communicating with Families
 Module 3.2.1

A CalSAC Module
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The California School-Age Consortium

The California School-Age Consortium (CalSAC) **provides training and advocacy** for afterschool, school-age care, and out-of-school time professionals throughout California.

Since 1982, CalSAC has been working to advance the needs of professionals. Through our focus on **Connections, Competence, and Community**, CalSAC can meet the needs of programs and professionals in the out-of-school time field.

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Getting Started

- Training Agenda
- Bike Rack
- Group Introductions

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Group Agreements

- Choose to be present and engaged in learning.
- Phone off or on vibrate.
- Avoid side bar conversations.
- Agree to disagree.
- Be aware of diversity in the group.
(culture, age, sexual orientation, privileges, gender and experience)

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Today's Objectives

By the end of this module, participants will

- identify their attitudes towards families;
- consider how their attitudes can enhance or detract from their ability to develop positive relationships with families;
- examine how a program's overall environment supports strong staff-family communication.

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Key Concepts

- Staff feelings and attitudes about families can help or hinder relationships with families.
- Family members are partners.
- Program staff and families exchange information in a variety of ways:
 - Chats
 - Formal conferences
 - Over the telephone
 - Via email, face-to-face
 - Off-site

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Key Concepts

- Program environment also contributes interactions between staff and families.
- Families are more willing to communicate with staff **when they feel welcome and accepted** at the program.

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Activity: Examining Attitudes toward Families

- Share a **positive experience** you have had with a family member of a child/youth in your program.
- What made the experience positive?
- What are the **benefits** of developing positive partnerships with families?

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Communication with Families

- Program staff and families are partners.
- Staff opinions about family members influence their ability to cooperate effectively with families.
- Identifying how feelings help or hinder working with a families can enhance communication and positive relationships with them.



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Activity: Opinion Statements

- Strongly Agree
- Strongly Disagree



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Activity: Using Positive Attitudes toward Families

- In small groups, brainstorm **10 actions you can implement** in your program to let families know you support positive attitude.



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Activity: Communication Climate

- Share one thing that is **easy** and one thing that is **difficult** with reference to working with families.



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Activity: Creating A Climate

Part 1:

- List 5 ways your program promotes positive staff-family communication.

Part 2:

- List 3 ideas for new ways your program could promote effective communication.

Part 3:

- Select one idea from Part 2 and develop a plan of action for implementation.

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What You Can Do Tomorrow:

- Say hello to family members when they enter your program or room.
- Learn family members' names; connect to the children and youth in your program.
- Give family members one positive piece of feedback about their child or youth at least once next week.
- Give them a call if you don't see them that week.

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Get Involved with CalSAC:

- **Join a Chapter** in your area!
- **Attend CalSAC's Afterschool and Summer Challenge** at the State Capitol – May 12-13, 2014.
- **Apply to be a CalSAC Trainer!**
- **Join us online:**  Twitter,  Facebook

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Thank You and Evaluations

Please take a few minutes to complete the evaluation for this module. Your feedback is greatly appreciated.



Thank you for your participation!

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3.2.1b

Developing a Family Friendly Atmosphere Handout

Select and circle two of the following positive attitude statements about families. Using those two statements, **develop a list of 10 family-friendly actions you and your program could implement** to communicate you support the two chosen positive attitude statements.

- Most parents want to know their children and youth are safe, happy, and productive, they are valued as individuals, and are well cared for in your program.
- Many parents would like to follow up on program activities with their child/youth at home.
- Even though often pressed for time, most family members really want to be a part of their child/youth's lives in your program.
- Most parents would like to know more about helping their child/youth to make friends and get along well with other people.
- Family members have good ideas about how your program should be run.
- When a child/youth is having difficulties in your program, most parents want to know what they can do to help solve the difficulties.
- To a child/youth, a parent is the most important person in the world.
- Families are a valuable resource for program planning.
- Family members have many talents, hobbies, skills to share with your program.
- Parents have a wealth of information to share about their child/youth's interests, talents, concerns, strengths, and needs.
- Families naturally do interesting and educationally rich activities with their children and youth in their daily routines and activities.
- Families want to greet me when they come into the program.
- My work is easier because I work with the families of the children and youth in my program.

Adapted from Source Material: Roberta Newman, Activity 1, *Building Relationships with Parents and Families*, by Roberta Newman in collaboration with Work Family Directions, Inc., page 5, with permission from Roberta Newman

Using Positive Attitudes toward Families

1.
2.
3.
4.
5.
6.
7.
8.
9.
10.



Creating a Climate for Communication Handout

Part 1: Think about five ways your program promotes positive staff-family communication.

Example: We send a monthly newsletter home to families, including all events and activities, birthdays, and a wish list. We send it home in English and Spanish.

1.
2.
3.
4.
5.

Part 2: List three ideas for new ways your program could promote effective communication (include activities you are currently trying to implement).

Example: Have a family area near the sign out binders; chairs, resources, and program information.

1.
2.
3.

Part 3: Select one idea from Part 2 and develop a plan of action for implementation.

Example: Create a family area near the sign out binders; chairs, resources, and program information.

- *Designate an area near the door, put up a table and a sign, "Welcome Families," – have information and resources*
- *Have a staff person near the table to direct families to the "Family Area" the first two weeks*
- *Put a few chairs near the table, have water pitchers and cups for the parents.*

New Idea Implementation Plan:
1.
2.
3.
4.
Considerations for Implementation:
1.
2.
3.