A WORKING DEFINITION

An ongoing, reciprocal, strengths-based partnership between parents, their children, and their children’s educational programs.

(Halgunseth, et. al., 2009)
WHY FAMILY ENGAGEMENT MATTERS

• Research strongly supports the impact of families/parent engagement.

• Families/parents hold critical information about their children. They are a unique resource and a key component of every child’s ecosystem.
CHILDREN WITH ENGAGED PARENTS, MORE LIKELY TO:

• earn higher grades and test scores, and enroll in higher-level programs

• be promoted, pass their classes, and earn credits

• attend school regularly

• have better social skills, show improved behavior, & adapt well to school

• graduate and go on to postsecondary education

• Cognitive stimulation during play is related to literacy and math levels in 3rd and 5th grade (Cook, et. al., 2012)

• Parent engagement focused on social-emotional outcomes helps children develop interpersonal school readiness skills, and reduces anxiety and withdrawal (Sheridan, et.al., 2010)

• Joint literacy activities and positive discussions about educational topics, contribute to more successful transitions to school and higher pre-k vocabulary and literacy skills (McWayne, et. Al., 2004; Rodrigues & Tamis-LeMonda, 2012)
PARENTS ARE CRITICAL FOR THEIR CHILDREN’S LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT

"The hallmark of [the parental] relationship is the readily observable fact that this special adult is not interchangeable with others."

*Dr. Jack Shonkoff, Board-certified pediatrician, Harvard Graduate School of Education*

- Nobody knows the child better than their parent
- Parents are a secure base to explore and learn:
  - The attachment bond is a key factor in developing a child’s social, emotional, intellectual & physical well-being
THE BUILDING BLOCKS OF PARENTING

Our community’s answer to the question:

“WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO BE AN ENGAGED PARENT?”

• Evidence-based
• Developed to create a consistent definition and message about family engagement
• Developed with input from multiple community partners
• Tested in several interviews with parents from the community
• Several revisions based on feedback from focus groups
I intentionally practice these 6 ideas to strengthen my child’s well-being

1. My children will succeed by trying hard and not giving up
2. I use everyday moments to promote learning with my children
3. My words have a powerful effect on my children
4. My family eats together, gets enough rest, and exercises
5. I stand up for my children at school
6. I stand up for my children in the community
1. MY CHILDREN WILL SUCCEED BY TRYING HARD AND NOT GIVING UP

Through perseverance, children can become smarter and more successful.

• “Growth” vs. “Fixed” Mindset (Dweck, 2006)

• “Grit” (Duckworth, 2016)

Yes, We Can!
Learning begins at birth, and can happen everywhere, at any time.

School readiness is a key determinant of 3rd grade reading.

• To be school ready children need to participate in activities that foster their language, literacy, and number skills.

Annie E. Casey Foundation (2010)
3. MY WORDS HAVE A POWERFUL EFFECT ON MY CHILDREN

The words of parents
(few or many, kind or harsh)
create an environment
that can either promote or hinder
a child’s cognitive and social development

From Neurons to Neighborhoods (2000)
4. MY FAMILY EATS TOGETHER, GETS ENOUGH REST, AND EXERCISES

Eating well, exercising, and getting enough rest are all necessary for children to learn at their best.

- When children of any age are tired, hungry, or when they get sick often they are not ready to learn.


Parental engagement is key to a child’s success in school.

• earn higher grades and test scores
• pass their classes
• attend school regularly
• have better social skills, improved behavior, and adapt well to school
• graduate and go on to postsecondary education”

Henderson & Mapp (2002)
Learning is hampered if the conditions for it are less than ideal. For a child, the task of learning is a full-time job.

- Parents should try to access whatever community resources they need to do

THE BUILDING BLOCKS OF PARENTING AS A TOOL IN YOUR WORK WITH FAMILIES
FOR FURTHER READING...


QUESTIONS? COMMENTS?
THANK YOU!!!