

The background of the slide features a series of stylized, 3D human figures in shades of blue, holding hands in a circle. The figures are rendered with a slight shadow, giving them a three-dimensional appearance against the solid blue background.

Darla Gundler
gundler@live.com

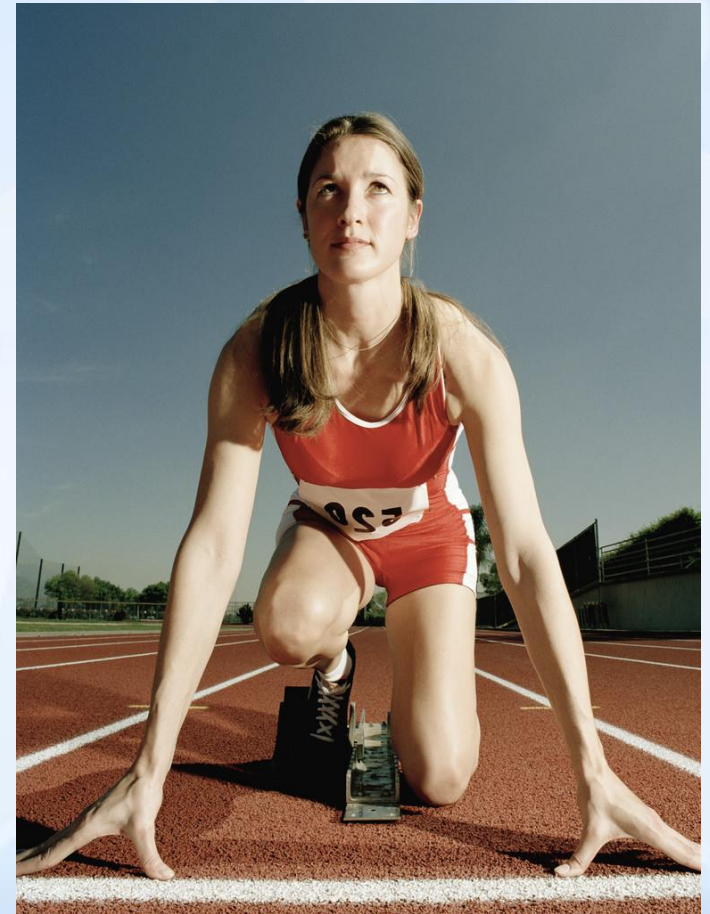
Molly Cole

Families as Partners in Policymaking,
Practice and Beyond

PLANNING:



Invite families from the very beginning of a project/stakeholder group.



IMPLEMENTATION



Where can we go to recruit families?

Can be internal *or* external to an organization/agency

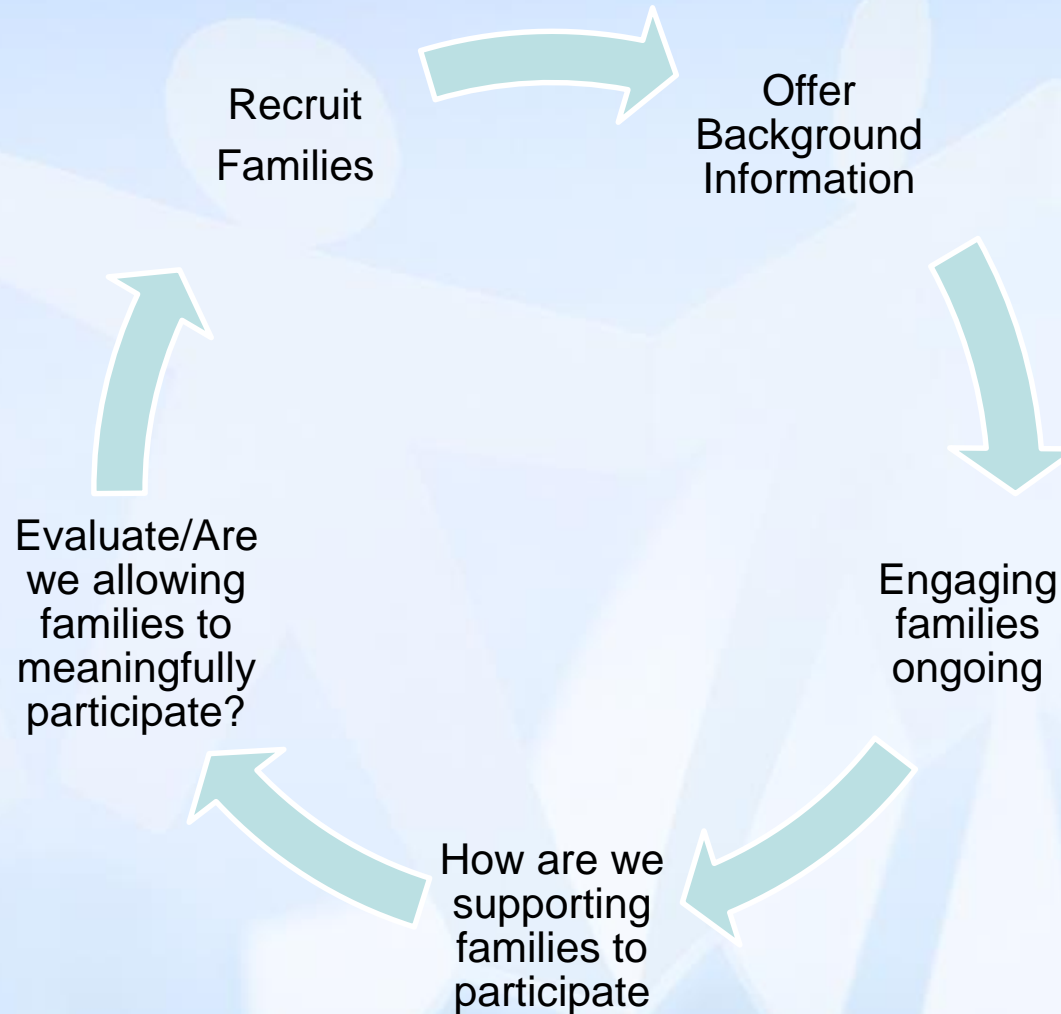
- A parent/professional on staff
- ICC Parent Representatives/State Advisory Council Representative
- Parent Co-Trainer of the Parent Training Center
- Parent Training and Information Center

Provide guidance on the progression of a defined scope of work

Engaging Families



An ongoing cyclical process



Questions to Ask...



- ☑ Is this the right time for the parent within their personal situation to join this stakeholder group?
- ☑ Do they have what they need to make an informed decision about participating on this stakeholder group?
 - ☑ Time commitment, support to attend the meetings, etc.
 - ☑ Is there a reimbursement structure? Is this clearly explained to the parent? What is the process?
 - ☑ Is there more than one parent involved?
 - ☑ Don't want to be a token parent representative
 - ☑ Is there a mentor assigned to each parent?



Families need to be informed?

- What is their role?
 - What are the expectations of the family?
 - Do they represent families or their own family experience only?
 - How can they connect with other families to truly be representative?
- How to meaningfully participate
- Changes in expectations as the project evolves

Things to consider



- ❓ Do we truly want to engage and allow families to participate?
 - ❓ Watch the body language and non verbal cues of the group
 - ❓ Watch the use of acronyms at the beginning
- ❓ Are written materials clear, visually appealing, informative, easy to read and understandable?
- ❓ Are there resources available to support families?
 - ❓ Is there funding support for family involvement?
 - ❓ If so, what is the mechanism and the process.
- ❓ How long is the commitment?
 - ❓ Short term, long term or ongoing?

Suggested Strategies



- ☑ Develop procedures to prepare families for active participation
- ☑ Develop guidelines or checklists for families to complete before each critical event
- ☑ Prepare a list of commonly used terms, acronyms and abbreviations
- ☑ Call on experienced parents to assist other families through the process

EVALUATE



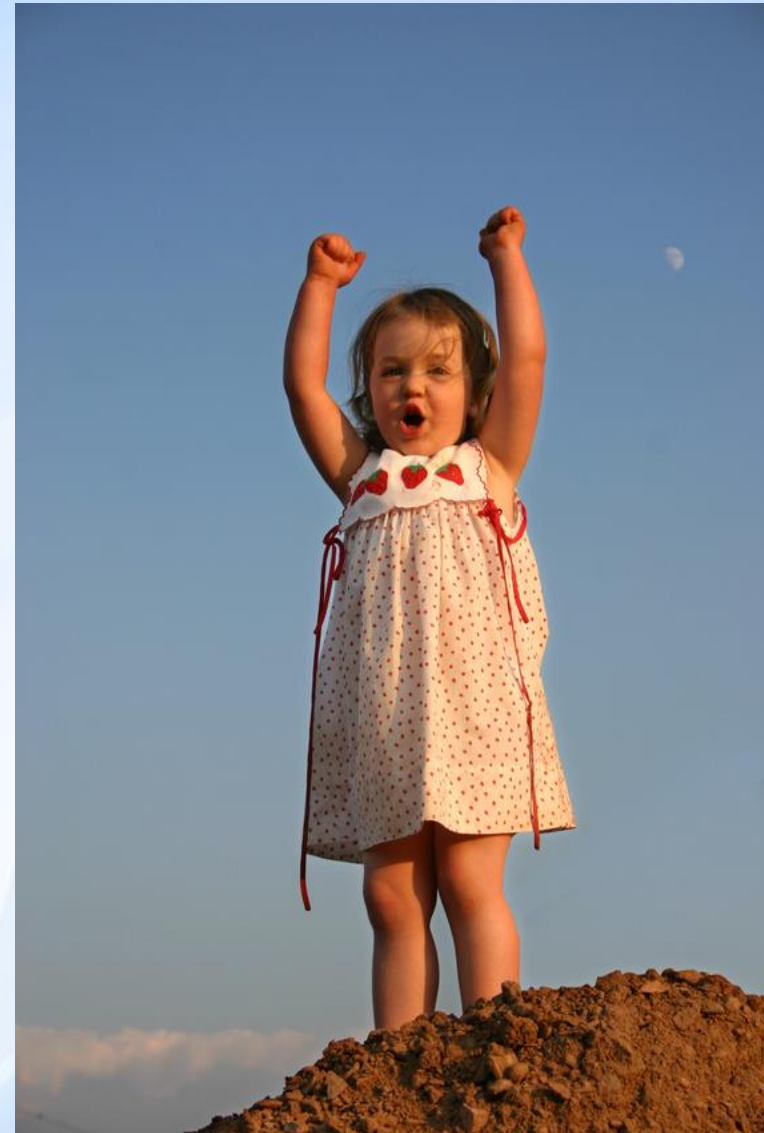
- ☑ Are there ongoing training opportunities for families to grow their skills?
- ☑ Did we assign a mentor/support person for families to go to for any questions/clarification
- ☑ Ask the family member:
 - ☑ Are you offered the opportunity to meaningfully be involved?
 - ☑ Are there other opportunities that you are interested in?
 - ☑ Is there anything that we can do better to support families?
 - ☑ Is this still the right opportunity for you?
 - ☑ Do you feel effective in your involvement?

Resources



- Serving on groups
www.servingongroups.com
- Essential Allies; Families as Advisors
- Words of Advice
 - Institute for Family Centered Care
- Partners in Policy Making
 - <http://mn.gov/mnddc/pipm/online.html>
- [Leading by Convening](#)

SUCCESS!



Take Home Messages!



- What is going to happen when you get back to your state?
- How to build meaningfully participate?
- If a parent misses a meeting, check in with them.
- Welcome and make a connection
- Ask parents if this is the right time for them to participate (*don't assume*)
 - Provide expectations and time commitment
- Provide background information to prepare parents to meaningfully participate
- Funding mechanism to engage more than one parent
- Support/mentoring available for families