Ohio Statewide
Family Engagement Center
at The Ohio State University

Healthy Communication with Families: A Reflection Tool

Overview: This tool is designed for family-facing professionals. Its purpose is to help with analyzing communication patterns in conversations or meetings with families. The tool will guide you through criteria for healthy communication and direct you to align data and evidence to support your perceptions. This reflection tool will help provide perspective for current communication practices and areas for growth in improved collaboration.

Directions: For each item on the reflection tool, rate your personal, school, and or organization's current level of practice. Provide evidence and considerations for next steps.

Level of Practice		Description
Not evident	1	Our practices do not reflect this communication principle yet.
Emergent	2	We try to do this. Our practices inconsistently reflect this communication principle.
Rising	3	Our practices usually reflect this communication principle, but we have room for growth.
Exemplary	4	Our practices reflect this communication principle with fidelity in each of our meetings.

Communication Principles	Rating	Evidence	Considerations and Next Steps
Sense of Purpose: Both I and/or my staff and parents/caregivers have a shared sense of purpose for successful outcomes for students. Each role is valued for the unique skills and perspectives they share. Roles of participants are clear.			
Patterns of Participation: There is a balance of voices between families and professionals. Communication is a multi-directional exchange of ideas.			
Inclusive: The communication includes both the professional(s) and parents/caregivers. A range of different backgrounds and experiences are "at the table." Inclusive language (such as "we" and "us") is the norm. Professionals clarify acronyms and jargon to ensure families can fully participate.			
Conflict and Decisions: Participants collaborate in a respectful and cordial exchange of ideas, even when participants disagree. Decision-making processes are clear and consistently followed.			
Mood and Tone: The mood during communication is authentic, engaged, and relaxed. The tone of communication is respectful, calm, and friendly.			
Physical/Virtual Space: The space for the communication, whether virtual or in-person, creates a sense of belonging. Participants are comfortable, open, and welcoming. The space is accessible for everyone.			