

Strengthening Partnerships with Parents Building Our Collective Resilience

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Goals of Workshop

- *Apply our understanding of trauma and resilience to working with parents and families*
- *Explore specific approaches to:*
 - *Engage parents in ways that support their children's learning and healthy development*
 - *Strengthen partnerships for our collective resilience*

KEEPIN' IT
REAL

Partnering with
Parents Is
Challenging

aarrghh



What Do We Want?

What do teachers want parents to do?

Parents should.....

- Make sure their child comes to school, on time; their child is prepared; their child does his/her homework
- Respect teachers and their work
- Review and sign all papers, homework, report cards, etc.
- Attend parent teacher conferences; attend class events & school events; attend IEP sessions - for learning and/or behavioral problems; follow through on their responsibilities for child's IEP, Accommodation Plan, etc.
- Notify the teacher re: absence or special circumstance

What do parents want teachers to do?

Teachers should.....

- Respect their child as an individual; teach their child in ways that promotes learning and desire to be in school; treat their child fairly; recognize and help my when child when he/she is struggling
- Treat them with respect and value their role in children's lives and learning; make them feel welcome in the classroom; invite them to volunteer or help
- Communicate when their child is doing well; communicate when they have a concern about their child's academic progress or behavior
- Make sure homework is clear and understandable for student and parents
- Set parent teacher conference at time that is convenient for parent
- Include them as partners in all planning re: child's learning and development, IEP's

What do schools want from parents?

Parents should

- Make sure their child has had enough sleep and has eaten before coming to school
- Make sure child's forms / paperwork (physicals, permissions, etc.) are up to date; return all paperwork, permissions, fees on time
- Make sure contact information for parent is up to date
- Follow school policy re: contacts, visits, discipline, etc.
- Attend school events; sign up for committees / events - volunteer; give feedback when asked
- Keep appointments for meetings re: child, IEP, etc.; work with school personnel to address child's discipline or learning issues

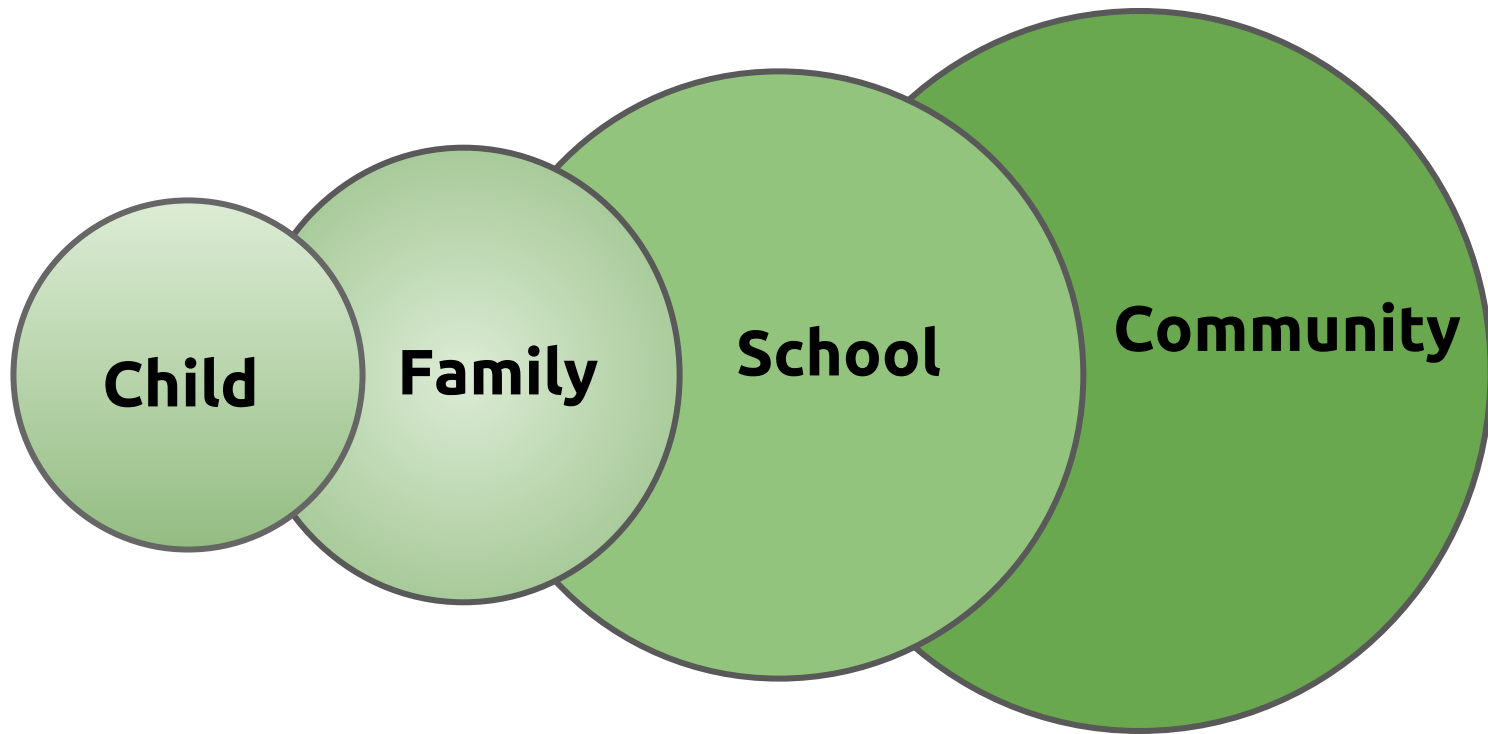
What do parents want from schools?

School should be a place where.....

- their child feels safe, welcome and belongs and, gets the support needed to succeed
- parents are welcome, respected and belong; parents are considered partners in their children's education
- parents' voice are listened to - where parents have input
- parents learn; parents meet other parents; parents contribute
- parents get help for their child and/or their family
- There is two-way communication between parents and school

What similarities do you see?

What differences do you see?



Ecological Framework

How Can Our Understanding of
Trauma and Resilience Help Us Build
Stronger Partnerships with Families?

Principles of Trauma Informed Care

- Safety
- Trustworthiness and Transparency
- Peer Support
- Collaboration and Mutuality
- Empowerment, Voice and Choice
- Cultural, Historical and Gender Considerations

Key Components of Resilience

Attachment & Belonging

- Bonds with parents and/or caregivers
- Positive relationships with competent and nurturing adults
- Friends or romantic partners who provide a sense of security & belonging

Capability

- Intellectual & employable skills
- Self regulation – self control, executive function, flexible thinking
- Ability to direct & control attention, emotion, behavior
- Positive self view, efficacy

Community Spirituality Culture

- Faith, hope, sense of meaning
- Engagement with effective orgs – schools, work, pro-social groups
- Network of supports/services & opportunity to help others
- Cultures providing positive standards, expectations, rituals, relationships & supports

As we build meaningful **Relationships** with students,
how do we extend our efforts to include **Families**?

How are we strengthening **Capabilities** of Children
and Parents that support learning and healthy
development for the whole family?

How are we creating a **Sense of Community**
in our school for **all** students and families?



**Both
&
And**

Insure Safety (do no harm)

Structure for Capabilities

A close-up photograph of a person's hands holding a white rectangular sign. The sign features the text "IT'S ALL ABOUT RELATIONSHIPS" in a bold, red, sans-serif font, arranged in three lines. The background is a blurred bokeh of red and pink lights. The person's hands are visible at the bottom corners of the sign, gripping it firmly.

**IT'S ALL
ABOUT
RELATIONSHIPS**

Welcoming Parents in Our Classroom

As teachers.....

- How are we creating a sense of **safety**?
- How are we “meeting parents where they are?”
- How do we make every family feel **welcome**?
- How do we make every family feel **respected** and **accepted**?

Creating a Sense of Belonging in Our School

As schools

- How do we create a **welcoming** environment for parents?
- How do we create a sense of **safety and caring** for parents as well their children?
- How do we reach all parents and communicate in ways that create **openness** and **trust**?
- Who can parents talk with to share family information or want help with a concern?



**“People don’t care how much you know
until they know how much you care.”**

Theodore Roosevelt

Community Liaison: Reaching Out to Hard to Engage Families

- Serves as a bridge from the school; Personally contacts the family; Visits the parent at home or in the community
- Is responsible for supporting individual families
- Builds a relationship; Speaks their language
- Explains what is going on at school and why parent input and participation is needed
- Accompanies the family to meet school representatives
- Supports the parent in subsequent steps relating to their child
- Makes connections to community supports and resources for the child and family



“Change moves at the speed of trust”

–Gary Gunderson

Wake Forest University Baptist Medical

Collaboration: Families as Partners



As teachers.....

How are we building **partnerships** with the parents of each of our students?

- How are we creating a sense of **trust** with parents?
- How are we recognizing **parents' strengths** and commitment to their child's success in school and healthy development?
- How are we **communicating** what's going well and what needs attention?
- How are we planning and working together to support the child's learning and development?



Choice, Voice and Empowerment

As teachers we need to find out:

- What parents know and do to support their child's education
- What questions do parents have; how parents get information; what help do they need to help their child
- What parents want to learn in order to support their child; what parents want to learn for themselves and what they want to learn from other parents
- How they want to be involved at school

Collaboration: Families as Partners



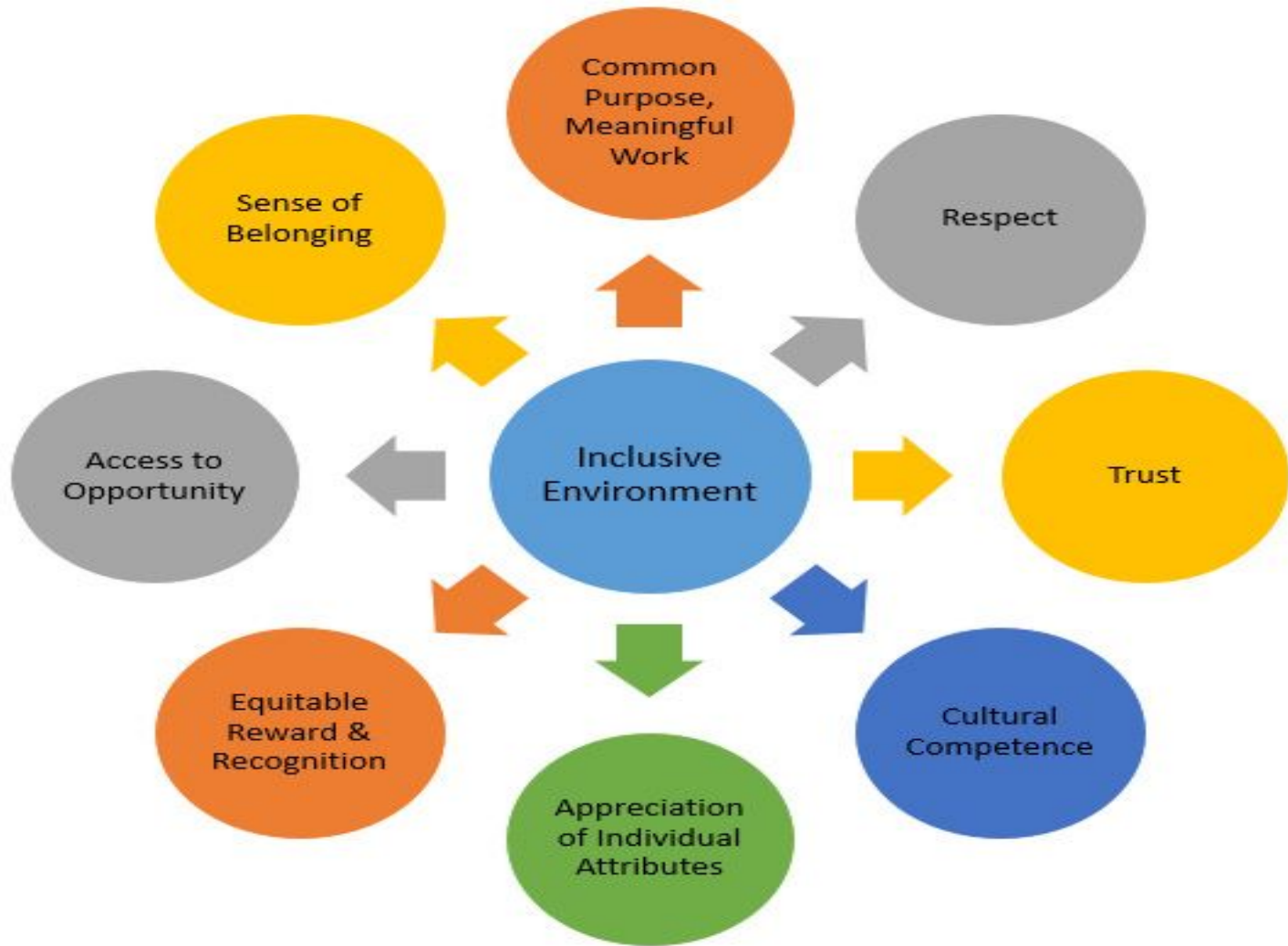
As Schools

- How do parents learn about what is going on at school? School policies? School events? School opportunities?
- How do parents meet each other?
- How do parents contribute to our school community? Share their skills and talents?
- How are parents involved in decision making at our school?
- What opportunities are available for parents to learn and / or develop new skills?

Choice, Voice and Empowerment

As Schools we need to take review and strengthen

- The variety of ways parents can be involved -- as volunteers, in decision-making, in planning family events, as mentors, as community ambassadors, etc.
- How parents learn about opportunities at our school
- The opportunities we offer to learn and build skills as parents, as adults and as families
- How we encourage parents to share their talents and skills
- The ways families help determine what we offer and evaluate the feedback about each offering



Inclusive: Family Centered

As Teachers, how often do we.....

- Invite families to visit our class and/or to participate in special class events or field trips?
- Communicate with families about what's going on in our class?
- Encourage families to volunteer or share a skill with our class?
- Schedule report card conferences with parents and their child at times that are convenient for the family?
- Organize activities for the whole family - when students and their parents create and learn together?

Inclusive: Family Centered

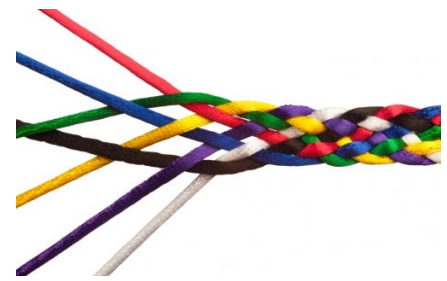
As schools

- How are we building a **sense of community** in our school?
- How are we building **relationships among parents** as well as with our faculty?
- How are our events **strengthening bonds between students and their family**? How are we **promoting learning together**?
- Do we offer **supports** that encourage participation? e.g. childcare, food, transportation
- How are families involved in planning and hosting our events?

*“Social support is the most powerful protection against becoming overwhelmed by stress and trauma. The critical issue is **reciprocity**: being truly heard and seen by the people around us, feeling that we are held in someone else’s mind and heart.”*

Bessel Van der Kolk, 2014, The Body Keeps Score

Connected to the Community



As teachers and schools

- Are we connected to the appropriate resources and supports for our students and families?
- How do we assure that our partners have the skills and capacity to support our students and families?
- What resources and services are available to address trauma and healing?
- What can we offer in our school? What additional collaborations and / or opportunities will enhance our efforts?

Comments? Questions?

Additional Resources

F.A.S.T. - Families and Schools Together, <https://www.familiesandschools.org/>

Washing Alliance for Better Schools - Empowered Families,
<http://www.wabsalliance.org/community-leadership/>

Beyond Consequences <http://www.beyondconsequences.com>

Self Healing Communities: Resilience Trumps ACEs,
http://www.rwjf.org/content/dam/farm/reports/reports/2016/rwjf430225/subassets/rwjf430225_1

COFI - Community Organizing and Family Issues, www.cofionline.org

Parent Mentor Program,
<http://www.lsna.net/Issues-and-programs/Schools-and-Youth/Parent-Mentor-Program.html>



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