



# Elevating the Family Voice to Make a Difference



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# Breakout Session Presenters:



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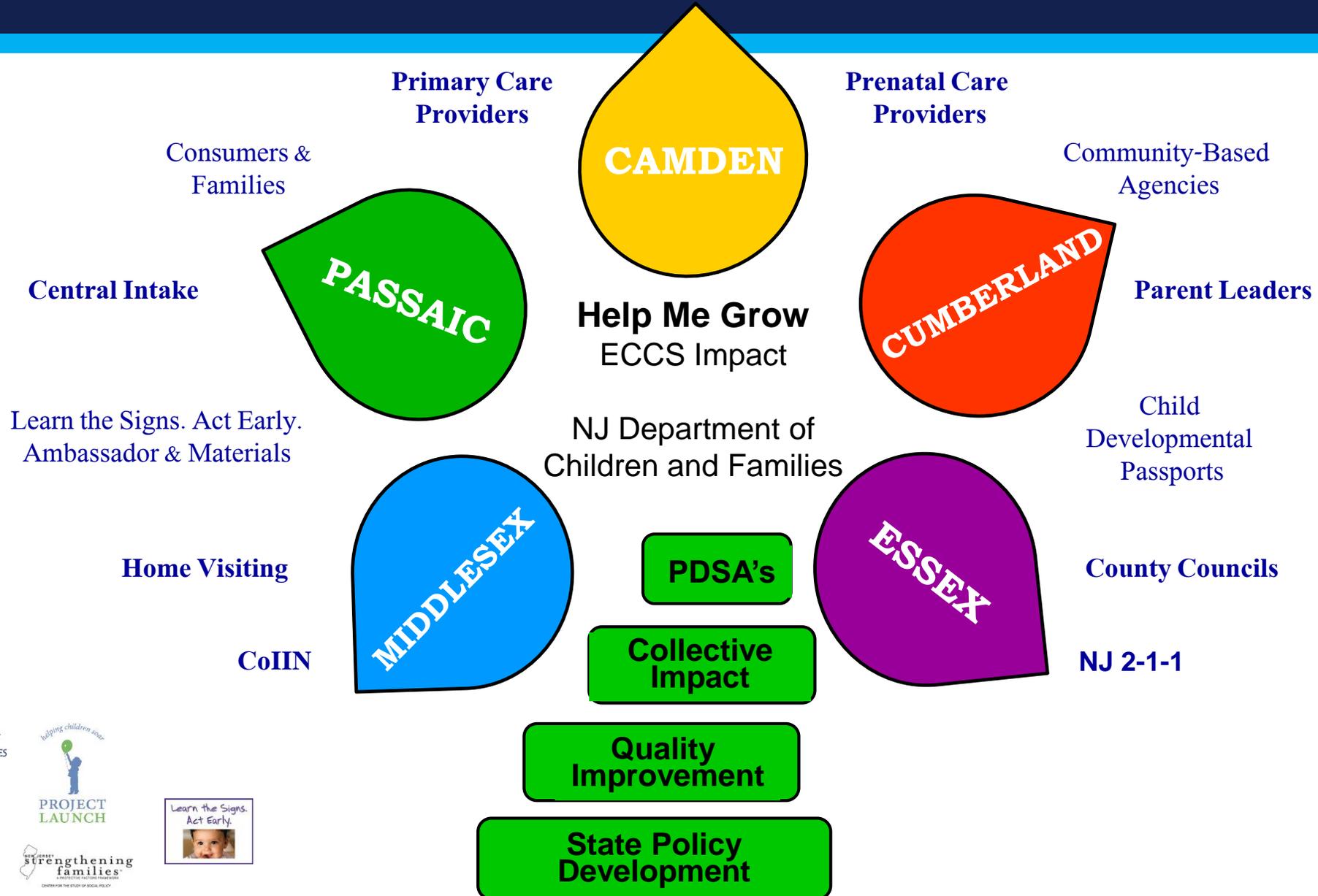
# Learning Objectives:

## By the end of this workshop you will be able to:

- Identify the use of Family Engagement within NJ ECCS Impact/HMG
- Identify what is Family Engagement
- Identify the Benefits of Family Engagement and the valuable Role of Parent Leaders
- Explore a continuum of Family Engagement
  - Transactional, Transitional and Transformational
- Identify strategies to Coalesce with Parents and Partners around Issues
- Identify a SMART Goal for Family Engagement within your HMG Initiative



# Enhancing Early Childhood Systems in New Jersey



# What is Family Engagement?

- **Family engagement** is a *collaborative and strengths-based* process through which early childhood professionals, families and children build positive and *goal-oriented relationships*. It is a *shared responsibility of families and staff* at all levels that requires *mutual respect for the roles and strengths* each has to offer. Family engagement focuses on *culturally and linguistically responsive relationship-building* with key family members in a child's life. These people include pregnant women and expectant families, mothers, fathers, grandparents and other adult caregivers. **It requires making a commitment to creating and sustaining an ongoing partnership that supports family well-being.** It also honors and supports the parent-child relationships that are central to a child's healthy development, school readiness and well-being.

Source: Head Start Early Learning and Knowledge Center  
<https://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/family-engagement>

# The 2 B's of Family Engagement

## BASIS to Family Engagement:

- Families have the greatest interest in ensuring that their children's and family's services meet their needs, and they have the most to gain in improving services and outcomes.

## BENEFITS of Family Engagement:

- Parents can be powerful partners with national, state and local agencies across systems.
  - Assessing needs
  - Planning improvement activities
  - Advocating for the resources needed to implement those activities and
  - Evaluating results

# Family Engagement Continuum

## A Continuum of Engagement

*Adapted from Strive*

### Transactional –

#### Community Investment

One-way communication  
Collaborative -> Community

#### Examples:

- Public Report Card release
- Information/Training
- Awareness Campaigns
- Social Media

#### Sample Metrics:

- # of Audiences reached
- # of reports written/distributed
- # of media mediums

### Transitional –

#### Community Involvement

Two-way communication,  
Collaborative -> Community

#### Examples:

- Community Advisory Committees
- Community Dialogues
- Calls to Action

#### Sample Metrics:

- Active Participation, turnover and retention
- # of activities that involve community members
- Increased accountability by decision-makers to affected groups

### Transformational –

#### Community Integration

Two-way equal communication  
Collaborative <-> Community

#### Examples:

- Issue-specific workgroups
- Joint decision-making
- Co-ownership of outcomes

#### Sample Metrics:

- Depth of Engagement
- Ownership of work
- Willingness of members to take action
- Transcending organizational interest for long-term collective work

# Transactional

## Community Investment: One-way Communication

Collaborative → Community

### ➤ Examples of Transactional Activities:

#### Developmental Promotion

- Family Tool Kits
- Information Sharing
  - Books Balls and Block events
- Family Surveys
- Parent Education Workshops or Trainings
- Participation in Parent Cafés



# Supports for Parents moving from Transactional to Transitional

➤ Understanding from families  
“like me”/ who have “been there”

➤ Focus on empowerment

- Educate
- Engage
- Enhance effectiveness

➤ Share:

- Information
- Parent development
- Emotional support
- Connection to resources
- Advocacy
- Leadership opportunities
- Friendship
- Celebration

# Transitional

## Community Involvement: Two-way Communication

Collaborative  Community

### ➤ Examples of Transitional Activities: Community

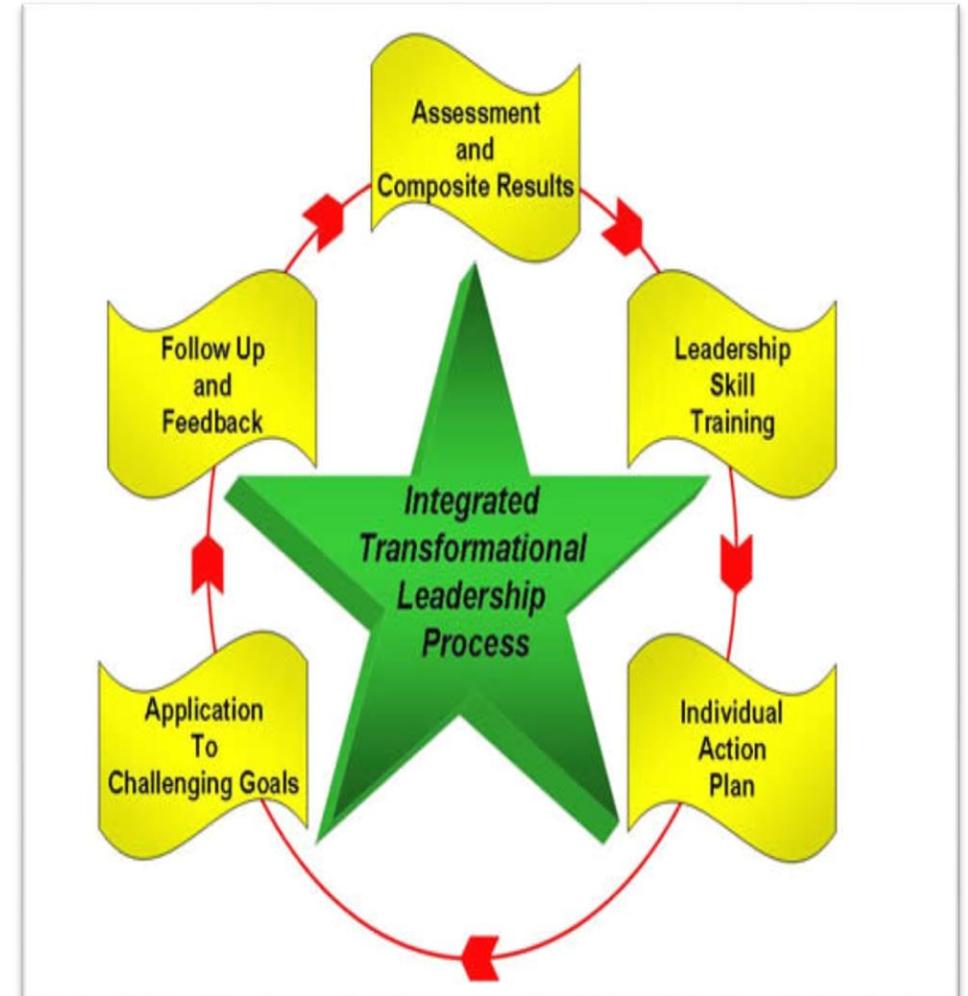
- Advisory Team Leads
- Plan for BBB event (Feedback)
- Feedback on Parent Survey Development
- Feedback on PDSA's
- Input toward issues in Community
- Facilitate Parent Café



# Pathway to Transformational Parent Leadership

## Critical supports:

- Contact with other parents in leadership roles
- Opportunities to take on leadership roles, however small, and safe settings to practice them
- Relationship with respected and trusted person who provides feedback and support
- Sense of belonging



# Transformational

## Community Integration: Two-way equal Communication

Collaborative ↔ Community

### ➤ Examples of Transformational Activities: Systems

- Linking Protocol Workgroup
  - Plan for Family Access Implementation
- Development of HMG Child Developmental Passport
- Co-Develop and Facilitate Training
- Employment within the System (Nicole)
  - Parent Perspective “Voice” all the time
- Encourage Connections and Collaborate on Grant Opportunities
- Parent Café – Use information to effect change within Policy



# Valuable Roles of Parent Leaders: Transformational Phase



- Advocate on an individual basis
- Act as a catalyst for new ideas
- Think about how systems fit together
- Help others understand how change happens
- Coordinate activities aimed at making change
- Help others work as a team
- Facilitate information sharing with decision-makers

# How can Parent Leaders get involved in your work within the Family Engagement Continuum?

Transactional, Transitional or Transformational

# From Transactional to Transformational



# Coalescing Around Issues

## Coalescing Around Issues is described as a habit.

It is a habit of practice in which groups of people come together around shared concerns or problems that they want to resolve.

### There is **Communality** when Coalescing around an issue:

- A Communality of Need
- A Communality of Purpose
- A Communality of Action

### While **Coalescing Around Issues** you have to agree to:

- Value each and all perspectives.
- Acknowledge individuality of language in discussing the issue.
- Agree upon data sources that contribute to understanding the issue.
- Commit to reaching consensus through shared understanding in the group.
- Acknowledge and agree that collective impact is greater than the individual impact.
- Agree to move on specific actionable goals.



# Coalescing Around Issues: The Parent Café Model

**Parent/Community Cafés** are a series of guided conversations based on the Strengthening Families™ Protective Factors Framework on leadership development and parent partnership.

**Be Strong Families / Strengthening Families Illinois** developed the first parent café process to support programs and communities in engaging parents, building protective factors, and promoting deep individual self-reflection and peer-to-peer learning.

**Parent Cafés are a gateway to providing parent leadership opportunities.**

- Parent Cafés **engage parents in meaningful conversations** about what matters most – their family and how to strengthen the family by building protective factors.
- **Relationship building** is the heart of the Parent Café and **positive social connections** is one of the Protective Factors that's explicitly taught through the Parent Café.

**Examples of Questions/Topics used in a Parent Café:**

- “What do you do when you don't understand what's going on with your child?”
- “How do you stretch a dollar to make it last?”

# Family Engagement: Key Points

- Build:
  - Trust
  - Self-confidence
  - Self-efficacy
  - Relationships
  - Support networks
- Listen for the heart, with the heart
- Communicate with honesty
- Start where families are, help them identify where they want to go
- Help families recognize strengths
- Lead together
  - See every parent as a leader
  - Make space for new leaders



# Setting S.M.A.R.T. Goals:



# S.M.A.R.T. Goals - SPECIFIC

➤ **Specific:** A specific goal has a much greater chance of being accomplished than a general goal. To set a specific goal you must answer the six “W” questions:

- **Who:** Who is involved?
- **What:** What do I want to accomplish?
- **Where:** Identify a location.
- **When:** Establish a time frame.
- **Which:** Identify requirements and constraints.
- **Why:** Specific reasons, purpose or benefits of accomplishing the goal.



# S.M.A.R.T. Goals - MEASURABLE

- **Measurable**: You can track the progress and measure the outcomes of a measurable goal
  - How much?
  - How many?
  - How will I know when my goal is accomplished?



# S.M.A.R.T. Goals - ATTAINABLE

- **Attainable**: An attainable goal is something that you can reasonably accomplish.
  - Is the goal reasonable enough to be accomplished?
  - How so?
  - Make sure the goal is not out of reach or below standard performance



# S.M.A.R.T. Goals - RELEVANT

➤ **Relevant:** A relevant goal is a worthwhile goal that will meet your needs.

- Is each goal consistent with other goals you have established?
- Does it fit with your immediate long term goals?



# S.M.A.R.T. Goals - TIMELY

➤ **Timely**: A timely goal needs to have a time limit.

- The time limit will establish a sense of urgency
- It will prompt you to have better time management
- This step will be completed by month/day/year...



# Strategies for FE S.M.A.R.T. Goals

**Reach out to family-led organizations & support them to lead/co-lead this effort:**

- **Identify small group of parents** from targeted community & community cultural brokers
- **Ask for their help** in understanding cultural, language, religious impacts & developing strategies to reach, engage & support families from their background
- **Establish a core group** of family leaders that has been oriented and trained to be on teams
- **Reinforce the commitment of valuing their continued involvement through all phases** of improvement activities, evaluation of progress and planning next steps.
- **Provide them with necessary supports** to sustain partnerships

# Example of FE S.M.A.R.T. Goal:

- **Specific:** - HMG State team will set up Quarterly Parent Cafe/Community Resource Fair to engage Parents on the topic of Developmental Health and milestones. Resources will also be available for families to connect with to address concrete needs, build connections, etc. (e.g. childcare, WIC, Home Visiting, FQHC's, Library, etc.) Education information will be shared and families will get connected. Families will also be offered opportunities to be Community HMG Ambassadors for Developmental Health Promotion – share with other parents importance of understanding how your child grows and activities to assist them.
- **Measurable:** # of Events, # of Attendees, # of Connections to Resources, # of Parents engaged for HMG Parent Ambassador Training.
- **Attainable:** Yes – We have partners to participate, strategies for outreach to parents. Quarterly is a reasonable time commitment.
- **Relevant:** Yes, - this meets our objectives for HMG outreach with Families and the Community
- **Timely:** Quarterly Parent Cafés in 2018 (March, June, September, December)

# S.M.A.R.T. Goals Activity:



# A circle of hands will receive us...



"You can do  
what I cannot  
do. I can do  
what you  
cannot do.  
Together we can  
do great  
things."

*- Mother Teresa*

# Resources:

- **Slide 5: Head Start Early Learning and Knowledge Center: Family Engagement Resources**  
<https://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/family-engagement>
- **Slide 7: Family Engagement/Community Engagement Continuum** -Adapted from STRIVE and borrowed from NICHQ  
<https://www.strivetogether.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/03/Community-Engagement-Continuum.pdf>
- **Slide 16: Leading by Convening : A Blueprint for Authentic Engagement – IDEA Partnership** - [www.ideapartnership.org/building-connections/the-partnership-way.html](http://www.ideapartnership.org/building-connections/the-partnership-way.html)
- **Slide 17: Resources for Coalescing Around Issues**
  - **National Alliance on Children’s Trust Funds and Prevention Programs:** Parent Café Resources *available English and Spanish* (Free)  
[http://www.ctfalliance.org/initiative\\_parents-2.htm](http://www.ctfalliance.org/initiative_parents-2.htm)
  - **Be Strong Families Parent Café Box** <http://www.bestrongfamilies.net/build-protective-factors/parent-cafes/>

## **Leading by Convening - The Partnership Way**

An overarching idea, a guiding framework, and a new discipline for leaders at every level. It is a set of trainings, tools, and resources for state, regional, and local leaders who run advisory groups, workgroups, etc., to engage stakeholders in systemic improvement initiatives. An interactive professional development opportunity that will improve your skills to: engage all team members, including diverse parents, on key issues; build support for shared work, address the adaptive, or relationship-based, aspects of change; and achieve your improvement goals!

For more information about *Coalescing Around Issues* and other tools from the *Leading by Convening* framework, its use across child and family-serving systems, and its positive impact, reach out to the National Center for Family Professional Partnerships at

<http://www.fv-ncfpp.org/> or go to: [www.ideapartnership.org/building-connections/the-partnership-way.html](http://www.ideapartnership.org/building-connections/the-partnership-way.html) or <https://ncsilibrary.wested.org/resources/171>

# Please complete a brief survey!

