



Quality Area

Introduction

6

Quality Area 6 - Collaborative partnerships with families and communities

Take a moment to consider the ways you and your educators communicate with all the families in your service.

Educators may find building relationships with families to be one of the most challenging aspects of their role. However, with some reflection and planning, these partnerships can be enlightening and rewarding.

Every family is unique. Families come from a wide range of backgrounds and a diversity of structures. For example, families could classify themselves as blended, extended, LGBTI and/or single parent families. Remember, when a child is enrolled, it is not just about the child. In fact, you are embarking on a journey with the whole family.



Quality Area 6 reminds you and your team that meaningful, respectful and supportive relationships with families contribute to quality outcomes for the children in your service.

Be mindful that it is equally important for families to experience a sense of *Belonging* in your service.

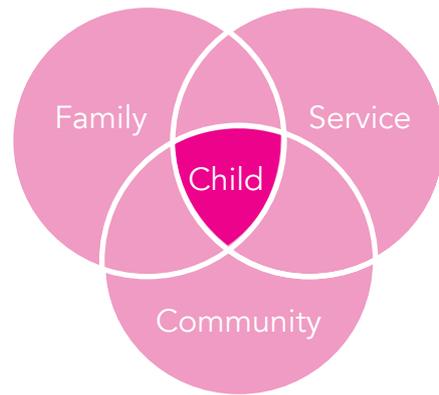
Children observe their families interacting with you. For example, if they observe that their family feels welcomed and valued, they are more likely to settle into your service and begin to also develop a sense of belonging.

Being sensitive to the different experiences of services that families may have had is important. Some families may find it difficult at first. They may have never experienced an education and care setting before or previously had an unhappy experience. Think about what it is like for the families coming to your service, from the first enquiry until their child transitions to school.

Stop and reflect:

- Do they feel welcomed, accepted, supported and respected?
- Are they acknowledged as, and supported to continue to be their child's first and most important educator?
- Do families feel listened to, knowing their ideas and concerns will be considered?

- Do your practices reflect the sense that families belong?
- Are the families' cultures, lifestyles, beliefs and values genuinely respected?
- Are families invited to be involved in decisions about their child's learning and wellbeing, as well as about the service as a whole?



Quality Area 6 also invites you and your team to consider your partnerships beyond the service. The child, the family and your service are an important part of a wider community. Partnerships within the community will ensure you better support families in their parenting role and children's learning and participation in your program. Are you familiar with your local community, and the available resources and organisations with whom you can share information and refer families?

The child is central, and an integral part of all three. Authentic collaboration of family, service and community results in best outcomes for the child.

2018 National Quality Standard

Concept		Descriptor
QA6		Collaborative partnerships with families and communities
6.1	Supportive relationships with families	Respectful relationships with families are developed and maintained and families are supported in their parenting role.
6.1.1	Engagement with the service	Families are supported from enrolment to be involved in the service and contribute to service decisions.
6.1.2	Parent views are respected	The expertise, culture, values and beliefs of families are respected and families share in decision-making about their child's learning and wellbeing.
6.1.3	Families are supported	Current information is available to families about the service and relevant community services and resources to support parenting and family wellbeing.
6.2	Collaborative partnerships	Collaborative partnerships enhance children's inclusion, learning and wellbeing.
6.2.1	Transitions	Continuity of learning and transitions for each child are supported by sharing information and clarifying responsibilities.
6.2.2	Access and participation	Effective partnerships support children's access, inclusion and participation in the program.
6.2.3	Community engagement	The service builds relationships and engages with its community.

What does meeting the NQS look like in QA6?

Quality Area 6 focuses on the importance of building collaborative and positive partnerships with your families and your community.



Quality partnerships involve establishing an atmosphere of welcome and respect, where families know they genuinely belong and are valued. Educators value the expertise, culture, values and beliefs of the families, and acknowledge them as their child's earliest and most significant educator. (Elements 6.1.2, 6.2.1)

Genuine relationships with families build a shared understanding of each other's expectations and ideas. This requires honest information exchange, including listening to families discuss their child's individual requirements each morning, and sharing the child's day with families each afternoon. (Elements 6.1.1, 6.1.2, 6.2.1)

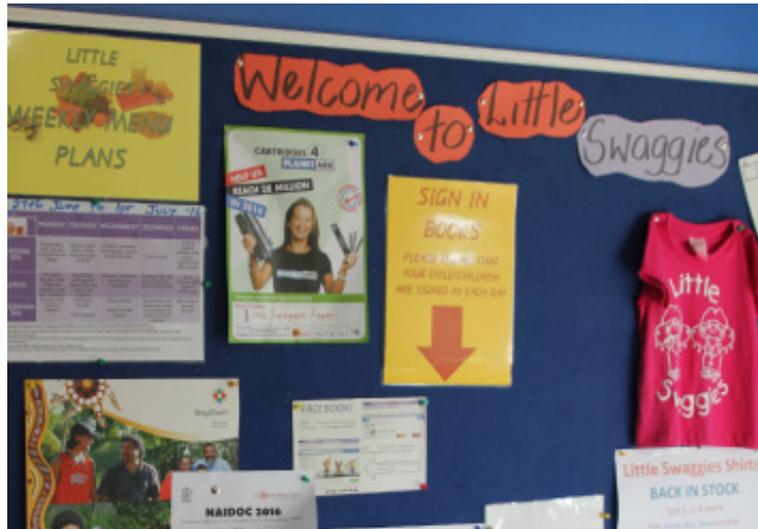


Consider ways you might ensure regular two-way communication with all families about your service, and about their child's learning and development.

Take time to listen to families and let them know you value them and their child. Let them know that you will listen to their suggestions, ideas and hopes for their child along with any concerns they may have.

(Element 6.1.1, 6.1.2, 6.1.3)

Provide current and reliable information for families in an area, or format, that can be easily accessed. Include information about the service, as well as information that would support their parenting role, such as relevant support services, resources and local community services. (Element 6.1.3)



Transitions provide opportunities for children to experience change, as well as an understanding of different expectations and practices. Collaborate with children and families to support and actively prepare them for smooth transitions between home and the service, rooms and groups within the service, and between routines and experiences. (Elements 6.1.2, 6.2.1)

Children and their families also benefit when the service has a strong commitment to valuing diversity, inclusion and community partnerships.

It is important that your physical environment reflects the diversity of the families, local community, and wider Australian community. (Elements 6.1.2, 6.2.2, 6.2.3)



Work together with your families and professionals within the community to support each of your children's access, inclusion and participation in all aspects of your program. You may need to review and adapt your environment, routines and/or staffing arrangements to achieve this. (Element 6.2.2)



Engage with your community and develop reciprocal relationships with other organisations, services, and businesses, as well as health and community professionals. Build community partnerships to further support families in their parenting role, to enrich children's learning, and to broaden their confidence and knowledge of the community they live in. Take the time to visit places in the community and invite members from local groups and local Elders into your service or FDC home to share their knowledge and culture. (Element 6.2.3)

Here's a snapshot of how service's rating in Quality Area 6 compares across Australia:

www.acecqa.gov.au/national-quality-framework/national-quality-framework-snapshots



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