

# What we are learning about Partnering with Parents



**P Provide:** Provide options that will accommodate work and family schedules. What are the most convenient times and places to meet? Whatever your role, prepare a plan A, B, and C! Partners are patient with the process because the results are worth it. Remember, parents are busy doing exactly what they should be doing – parenting!

**A Ask:** When you know what parents need, it is easier to know how you can help them. You never know until you ask if parents want to work with you as a team. Don't assume. Always ask.

**R Relationships:** To be a true partner, you must build authentic relationships and have great rapport. Be a friend. Be sincere. These relationships pave the way to beneficial outcomes that are only possible through partnership.

**E Encourage:** Encourage parents by recognizing individual strengths! Be flexible so parents can explore and exercise their strengths in ways that work best for them *and* strengthen their families.

**N Nurture:** Nurture parents and nourish their strengths. Listen to their thoughts. Acknowledge and validate their ideas. Implement parents' recommendations and ideas whenever possible.

**T Trust:** Parents and practitioners need to find a trust between each other. Take the time to get to know each other. As trust becomes possible, the strengths of each partner can shine.

**S Succeed:** A partnership will succeed when both partners are committed to learning from each other and listening to each other's ideas. Be prepared to change your mind and find the best solutions to strengthen families and communities!

## Using the PARENTS Acrostic

The PARENTS acrostic is meant to be used as tool to help guide meaningful conversations about the value of true partnerships with parents.

### Who Should Use It?

It can be used in parent groups, group of practitioners and professionals, and especially when practitioners and parents are meeting together. It can be a useful tool for conversation cafes, table talk and other kinds of discussions.

### Some Suggested Uses

The acrostic is embedded with concepts and ideas that, when implemented, will help to build strong parent partnerships.

- ✓ Brainstorm with a parent group
- ✓ Individual parent-professional mentoring relationships
- ✓ A launch pad for creating parent-provider conversation

### Some Suggested Activities

- 1 Take a line in the puzzle such as RELATIONSHIPS and PARTNER which appear in the same line. Talk about how the two words relate to each other. (People may say that relationships lead to partnerships. Or perhaps good relationships are at the heart of good partnerships.) Do the same process with each line and the word found within it. How do they relate to each other?
- 2 List three things under each line that you think are significant or critical when working with parent partnerships. For example, under FLEXIBLE, someone might say:
  - Schedule meetings or get-togethers based on times and ideas that parents suggest work for them
  - Change an approach if parents indicate it's not working!
  - Try ideas that might be "different" or have never been tried before but which parents think might work.
- 3 Ask participants to make up their own answers to the PARENTS acrostic. In other words, take the words that are in the dark boxes that spell out PARENTS and give their own definitions to PROVIDE, ASK, RELATIONSHIPS and so on.

**need2know**  
Resource from the ANPPC



The Children's Trust Fund Alliance supports two primary functioning parent bodies:

### Alliance National Parent Partnership Council (ANPPC)

The goal of the Alliance is to expand and advance the meaningful and authentic roles of parent leaders in state Children's Trust and Prevention Funds and in the Alliance. As one strategy to support this goal, the Alliance created the Alliance National Parent Partnership Council (ANPPC) in 2007, consisting of parent leaders who are familiar with the work of their states' Children's Trust Funds and who have experience and expertise that will be helpful on the national level. Children's Trust funds nominate outstanding parent partners from their own state work to serve on the council.

The council is committed to serving as a national model for effectively partnering with parents and expanding and integrating the powerful role of parent leaders in state children's trust and prevention funds and community-based programs.

#### ANPPC Members:

- Arizona – Edward Casillas
- Colorado – LaShay Canady
- New Jersey – Margaret "Maggie" Fye
- New York – Kara Georgi, Co-Chair
- Oklahoma – Betty Hawkins-Emery
- Washington State – Victoria Hilt
- West Virginia – LaCrisha Rose, Co-Chair

#### Alliance Contact:

- Martha Reeder, Senior Associate – [martha.reeder@ctfalliance.org](mailto:martha.reeder@ctfalliance.org)

#### Learn more at:

[ctfalliance.org/partnering-with-parents/anppc](http://ctfalliance.org/partnering-with-parents/anppc)

### Birth Parent National Network (BPNN)

The Alliance supports the Birth Parent National Network (BPNN) to promote and champion birth parents as leaders and strategic partners in prevention and child welfare systems reform. The BPNN is a dynamic and growing national network of more than 200 birth parents and organizations working together to influence policies and practices that affect children and families.

#### The Alliance Supports the BPNN by:

- Facilitating opportunities for parents to share their perspectives with policymakers
- Providing training and supports to BPNN parents interested in engaging in policy work
- Hosting regular webinars, trainings and an annual virtual convening
- Working together to build a cohesive and unified national voice to inform policy and practice

#### BPNN Members Include:

- Birth Parents who were previously involved with or at risk of becoming involved with the child welfare system and willing to engage in policy work
- Organizations that are committed to identifying and supporting parents as strategic partners in systems reforms.

#### Alliance Contact:

- Meryl Levine, Senior Associate – [meryl.levine@ctfalliance.org](mailto:meryl.levine@ctfalliance.org)

#### Learn more at:

[ctfalliance.org/partnering-with-parents/bpnn](http://ctfalliance.org/partnering-with-parents/bpnn)

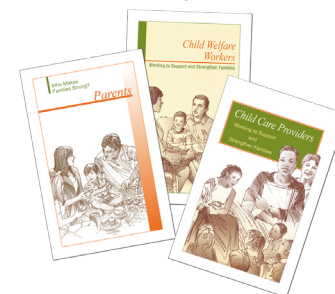
## Parent Partnership Resources

The Alliance has many resources that support parent partnerships at:

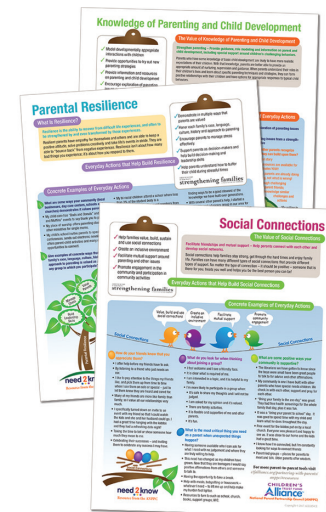
[www.ctfalliance.org](http://www.ctfalliance.org)



**Building and Sustaining Effective Parent Partnership – Stages of Development**



**3 Booklets from the New Jersey Department of Children and Families, Division of Prevention and Community Partnerships**



**Parent-to-Parent Info-Graphics on Building Protective Factors**