

# Two-Minute Tips

## COVID-19 Edition: Family Engagement

An important aspect of a high-quality early childhood program is building and maintaining strong relationships with families.<sup>1</sup> During the pandemic, families need opportunities to ask questions and voice concerns. These opportunities support social connections and reassure families about their children's well-being. Families feel appreciated, included and respected when they are informed of changes in advance, listened to, and assisted with resources.

### Practice Tips

#### Highlight Changes in Policies

Communicate updates in policies and procedures to families in their preferred language and in a manner that they can understand.

Promote family engagement by sharing the child's daily experience through regular communication (e.g., daily report, text message, email, photo or video sharing, etc.).

Inform families of the new daily routines so that they can practice them at home. This will make the transition easier for children.<sup>2</sup>

#### Try to Include Children

Articles about ways to support children:

- [Helping Children Deal with Change and Stress](#)
- [Helping Children Cope with Changes Resulting From COVID-19](#)
- [Tips, Strategies, and Books to Help Children Cope with Covid-19 Life Changes](#)

Activity Ideas to do at home:

- [Activities for Kids During Quarantine](#)
- [20 Creative Activities for Kids to Do At Home During COVID-19](#)
- [6 Therapeutic Activities for Kids During the Coronavirus Outbreak](#)

Free downloadable children's books about COVID-19:

- [COVID-19 Books for Kids: U of MD](#)
- [FREE eBooks about Coronavirus / COVID-19: NYC School Library System](#)
- [Family and Children's Books related to COVID-19: NH Family Voices](#)
- [Books to Help Kids Cope with COVID-19 / American Psychological Association](#)

#### Consider Hosting a Virtual Parent Event

Plan a virtual event for families around a topic of interest, such as Q&A, cultural activities, and discussions around how families can support one another. Invite families to host.

Consider using polls to determine topics of interest. It might be good to offer these regularly and at different times of the day, so everyone can attend at least one!

### Tips in Action!

Watch [this video\\*](#) for an example on how to promote family engagement.

\*Disclaimer: Linked media was filmed before COVID-19. Please follow the necessary guidelines to make these tips helpful and safe for your program.

### References

<sup>1</sup>Pennsylvania State University (2017). [Parent engagement practices improve outcomes for preschool children](#). (Issue Brief). (<https://bit.ly/3uRNyVO>)

<sup>2</sup>National Association of School Psychologists. (2020). [Helping children cope with changes resulting from COVID-19](#). (<https://bit.ly/3tiuLTe>)

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