



Engaging Families in the Digital Age

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Agenda

- What is Family Engagement?
- Understanding Your Audience
- Strategies That Work
- Tools You Can Use

What is Family Engagement?

Family engagement is the process used to build genuine relationships with **families**.

If THAT'S all it is... Why is it so hard?!

- Programs invite **families to participate** in decision making and goal setting for their child.
- Teachers and programs engage families in **two-way communication**.
- Programs and teachers engage families in ways that are **truly reciprocal**.
- Programs provide **learning activities** for the home and in the community.
- Programs invite families to participate in **program-level decisions** and wider advocacy efforts.
- Programs implement a **comprehensive program-level system** of family engagement.

Source: **National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC)**

ACTIVITY

Step 1: Write down 3-5 tools you currently use for family engagement

Step 2: Categorize them by the method of engagement

- Written
- Verbal (Face-to-Face or Phone Calls)
- Online
- Text

Lessons from Marketing

- Marketing is the cultivation of a **relationship** for mutual benefit
 - Companies attempt to understand the needs of customers, and offer services that fill them

Understanding the Alaska Parent in 2020

- 33% of Alaska children live in a household that lacks secure employment
- 29% of Alaska children live in a single-parent household
- What does this mean for you?
 - **Significant barriers to family participation!**

Understanding the Parent in 2020

Barriers to Participation: **TIME, MONEY, TRANSPORTATION, CHILD CARE**

A day in the life of a working parent.....

7:00 AM – wake up, get ready for the day, have a cup of coffee
7:30 AM – wake up the kids, grab outfits, make breakfast
8:00 AM – packing bags and lunch
8:15 AM – out the door. Drop off kid #1. Drop off kid #2
9:00 AM – 5:00 PM work
5:20 PM – pick up kid #1. Pick up kid #2
5:45 PM – home
6:00 PM – make dinner
6:30 PM – family mealtime
7:00 PM – free time (WHAT'S THAT?!)
7:20 PM – bath time, ready for bed, stories
7:45 PM – bedtime

Understanding the Parent in 2020

- Average age of first-time Alaska moms with children under the age of 6:
 - Anchorage – 25.9
 - Mat-Su – 25.1
 - Northwest Arctic – 22.1
 - These averages are higher for married and college-educated women
- Millennials & Generation Z
 - The **youngest** millennial turns 24 this year.

Understanding your Audience

Mobile communication preference of Internet users in the United States as of August 2017, by age group



A table showing the percentage of internet users in the United States who prefer different mobile communication methods, categorized by age group. The methods are Text, Voice, Video, and Data communication. The age groups are 18-29, 30-44, 45-54, 55-64, and 65+.

	18-29	30-44	45-54	55-64	65+
Text	61%	62%	54%	40%	28%
Voice	26%	33%	34%	39%	67%
Video	7%	9%	14%	14%	18%
Data communication	12%	9%	9%	8%	5%

Understanding your Audience



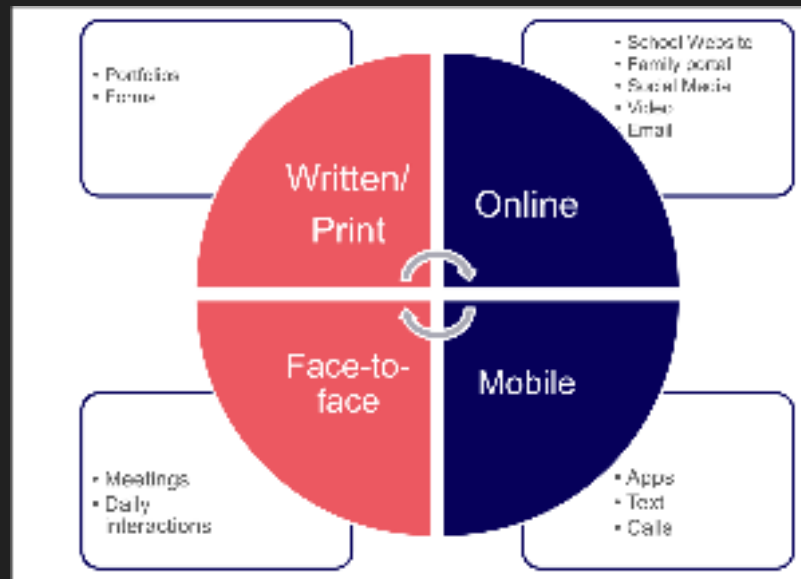
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Millennials have used 25-hour and a new average of 100 minutes per day, which is up from 50 minutes per day. Millennials are the most likely to use mobile devices for communication, with 80% of Millennials using mobile devices for communication, compared to 60% for Generation Y and 40% for Generation X. The slide concludes that Millennials are the most likely to use mobile devices for communication, with 80% of Millennials using mobile devices for communication, compared to 60% for Generation Y and 40% for Generation X.

Millennials are completely comfortable reading information on mobile devices while participating in other activities.

Understanding your Audience



Options for Engagement

Written/In Print

- Easy to do
- Tangible – can be more personal
- Low Cost
- Can't track engagement
- Easily lost
- Slow return communication (if any)

In Person

- High barrier to participation
- Not equitable
- High impact
- Personal
- High cost
- Best form of two-way communication

Online Engagement

Mobile

- Low cost
- Instant tracking
- Easy to reply
- Feels personal
- Requires consistency
- Measurable engagement

Online

- Low cost
- Instant tracking
- Can feel personal
- Can feel impersonal
- Requires consistency
- High engagement

Digital Engagement Works!

Case studies

18% increase in attendance

39% reduction in course failure

Examined 22 Middle and High Schools

Source: Columbia University, 2017

Weekly, automated text messages were sent to parents with reports on student attendance, missed assignments, and course grades.

Status reports successfully shifted parent belief's regarding their child's ability, efforts, and productivity.



Increase in at-home literacy activities for preschoolers

Increased parent communication

31 preschools San Francisco Unified School District

Source: Stanford University, 2018

3x a week text messages

Literacy tips to practice at home



Email

#1 online activity

Guiding principles:

Content has to be...

- Relevant
- Brief
- Visual
- Action-oriented



Apps

64% of Americans have a smartphone

Can be used for a variety of purposes:

- Announcements
- Student Portfolios
- Progress Reports
- Resource Sharing

Seesaw



Text Messaging

88% of American adults have a cell phone.

Blacks and Hispanics have the highest usage of text messaging.

Leading method of communication for behavioral change.



Text **EARLY** to 858777 for weekly tips and program updates (birth to 5 years)

Text **YOUTH** to 588777 for program updates (ages K-5th grade)

Text **BRIGHT** to 274440 for tips and local events for parents and caregivers of children ages 0-5.

Social Media

Social media is uniquely positioned to be relationship-building.

Leverage that!

While respecting privacy...

○ Facebook Groups



○ YouTube Channels



○ Pinterest Boards



Strategies for Facebook



Strategies for YouTube



Record your own content.

Build trusted playlists for parents to subscribe to.

Strategies for Pinterest



Provide at-home activity ideas by theme or age.

Strategies for Pinterest



Give updates on in-class events.

Privacy Disclaimer

- Before uploading any information about a child to any shared media platform, it is important to have parental consent.
- You also want to consider the protection of the privacy of your staff.
 - Consider using organizational accounts and software that anonymizes personal contact information.

The image shows a sample parental consent form titled "Learning Together" with a subtitle "EXAMPLE OF PARENTAL CONSENT". The form is for a child named "CHILD'S NAME" and a parent/guardian named "PARENT/GUARDIAN NAME". It includes a section for "I hereby consent to the participation of my child in the program and the use of my child's name and image in the program." and a section for "I hereby consent to the use of my child's name and image in the program." The form also includes a section for "I hereby consent to the use of my child's name and image in the program." and a section for "I hereby consent to the use of my child's name and image in the program." The form is dated "DATE" and signed by "SIGNATURE OF PARENT/GUARDIAN".

Crafting Your Engagement Strategy

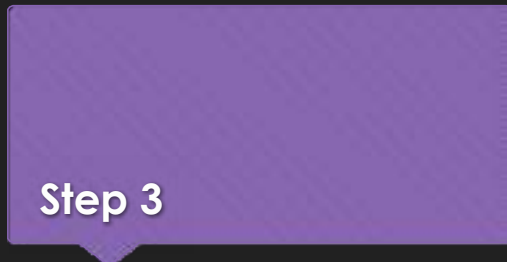
Where to Start

Step 1

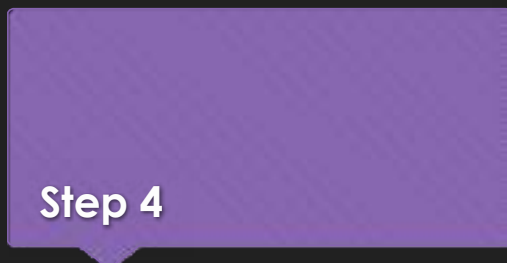
Know your goal.

Step 2

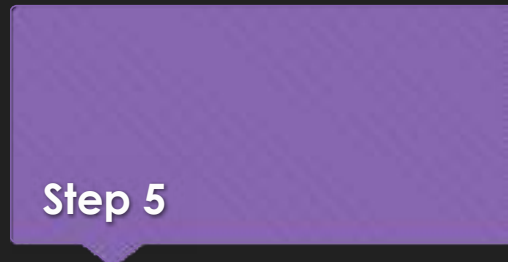
Identify and
Understand Your
Audience



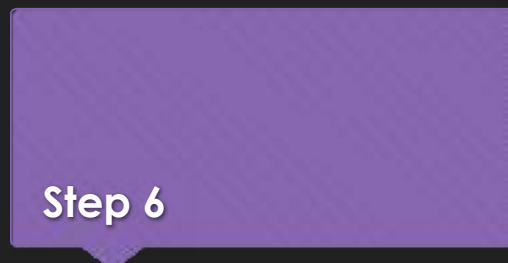
Pick Your
Strategy



Implement



Evaluate



Repeat

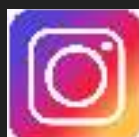
Questions?

Best Beginnings

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Crafting a Digital Family Engagement Strategy

Step 1: Determine your goal

- What do we hope to achieve from this engagement?

Step 2: Identify your audience

- Who are they?
- How do they want to receive communication?

Step 3: Pick your strategy

- Content
- Method
- Frequency
- Capacity
- Cost



Step 4: Implement

- Launch date
- Time period

Step 5: Evaluate

- Successes
- Challenges
- Return on Investment

Step 6: Repeat

- Opportunities for expansion?
- Changes you want to make

Notes:

