# 6.1.1 Engagement with the Service

Families are supported from enrolment to be involved in the service and contribute to service decisions.

Families are supported from the time they enrol their child to participate in and contribute to decisions about:

* their child’s learning
* service operations.

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| To **MEET** QIP and Self-Assessment Tool (SAT) | To **EXCEED** the QIP and Self-Assessment Tool (SAT) |
| *Give an example of a recent enrolment where you talked with the parents about what they expected their child to do and learn at the service.* | *Please give an example showing the way you and your team consistently support families to make meaningful contributions to service decisions.* |
| In a recent enrolment discussion with parents, we focused on their expectations for their child's experience at our service. They were particularly interested in their child developing social skills by making new friends and learning socially acceptable interaction methods. They also emphasized the importance of their child feeling safe, building a sense of belonging, and progressing in literacy and numeracy. Additionally, they hoped their child would continue using their home language and engage creatively in arts and free play while developing independence in daily routines. | We actively support families in making meaningful contributions to our service through various channels. Families participate in shaping their child's learning priorities and routines, and we value their feedback during reviews of our philosophy, policies, and procedures. We also encourage families to contribute to our service's Quality Improvement Plan and Safety Assessment Tool, engage in committees, and share insights through surveys on diverse topics like hygiene and educational programs. |
| *Give an example of ensuring parents understand the progress of their child’s learning and development.* | *Please give an example of a time where your reflections led to alternative ways of supporting a family’s participation in service decisions and review processes.* |
| To ensure parents are well-informed about their child's progress, we employ various strategies. We organize parent information nights and portfolio reviews, where we showcase the children's work and discuss their learning milestones. Additionally, we maintain a closed Facebook group for regular updates and share insights during daily pick-up and drop-off conversations. We reference the Early Years Learning Framework (EYLF) and My Time, Our Place (MTOP) during these interactions to contextualize the children's achievements and address any developmental concerns proactively. | Reflecting on our approaches, we found that traditional meeting times limited some families' participation. To address this, we introduced flexible communication methods and event timings, such as weekend activities and virtual meetings, to accommodate working parents. This flexibility allowed us to harness diverse family strengths and interests, broadening our understanding and application of community resources, and ensuring all voices are heard. |
| *Please explain how you provide opportunities to all parents to participate in or lead activities and experiences.* | *Please explain how you and your team actively support families to connect with other families or community services to help support their family needs or those of their child.* |
| We actively encourage all parents to participate in or lead activities by offering a variety of opportunities that cater to their skills and interests. Parents can get involved in curriculum activities like cooking, reading, and arts and crafts, or share their cultural traditions. We also invite them to join and sometimes lead excursions, providing a great platform for direct engagement with their child’s educational experience and fostering a community spirit within the service. | To foster connections among families and with community services, our team organizes social events like playdates and barbecues, and informational sessions with local services, including financial and parenting support. We also maintain a well-informed parent library and facilitate introductions to local medical and ancillary services, empowering families to support each other and access necessary resources effectively. |
| *Please give an example showing how you use your knowledge of parents’ occupations, hobbies, and community connections to involve them in decision-making processes.* | *Please give an example of how the enrolment and orientation procedure encourages families to engage with service decision-making processes.* |
| We utilise parents' professional backgrounds, hobbies, and community links to enhance our decision-making processes. For instance, parents have led educational sessions based on their occupations, suggested and helped organise excursion venues, and connected us with local community organizations and cultural groups. This inclusive approach ensures diverse experiences for the children and aligns service offerings with the unique needs and strengths of our community. | Our enrolment and orientation procedures are designed to engage families actively in decision-making from the start. We highlight opportunities for involvement and gather information on families' interests to tailor our engagement strategies. The orientation includes introductions to staff, detailed tours of our facilities, and thorough explanations of our policies and practices, ensuring families are well-informed and feel included in the community from day one. |
| *Please give an example of the way your communication with parents encourages their engagement with the service.* | *Please discuss how families’ perceptions of their role may influence how they participate in the service, and provide an example of action taken to change their views.* |
| Our communication with parents is designed to foster strong engagement with our service. We prioritize culturally sensitive communication, adjusting our approach to eye contact and the formality of address to respect diverse backgrounds. We explain our preference for digital over traditional mail communication to ensure timely and effective exchanges. Our communications are personalized to highlight parents' contributions and strengths, making them feel valued and involved. This approach builds professional, yet friendly relationships that encourage active participation and ongoing dialogue about their children’s experiences and development. | Families’ perceptions of their roles significantly impact their engagement with our service. To address misconceptions, we hold informative sessions that outline how families can influence service decisions beyond just their child's care. By involving them in broader policy and community discussions and actively seeking their input through various forums, we help reshape their views, emphasizing their critical role in our educational and operational community. |