

How to Develop Family Leadership

- ✿ Be a Mentor for the family. Provide coaching on the processes
- ✿ Leading from “the side” (with the explicit permission from the parent) and supporting parents as they develop confidence in their leadership abilities
- ✿ Providing appropriate articles and other resources to build the skills and knowledge of parents
- ✿ Arranging for parents to attend formal and informal training sessions
- ✿ Accept them as they are: clothing, speech patterns, and problems.
- ✿ Don’t invite just one parent. Have at least 2 so they are not the “token” parent.
- ✿ Help them overcome the barriers to participation.
- ✿ Hold meetings at a time convenient for parents. Prepare them in advance with: who will be there; how will others be dressed; what will happen at the meeting; what will my role be?
- ✿ Give them easy to read definitions and explanations of acronyms and other language used at the meetings or within the system.
- ✿ Don’t take it personally when they express anger at the system or tell it like it really is.
- ✿ Pay attention to what is happening in their personal lives. It will affect their ability to participate.
- ✿ Give them the opportunity to talk and listen to what they have to say.
- ✿ Follow-up on what they say
- ✿ Follow-up with the parent after each meeting to make sure they understand what happened, when and where the next meeting is going to help, and how they will continue to be involved.

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