Developing Trusting Reciprocal Relationships through Home Visits

Educator conducts three home visits to develop relationships with families.

Key Method

Educator plans, conducts, and reflects on three home visits.

Method Components

Meaningful Family Engagement

Family engagement is about every adult in a child's life working together to help the child reach their full potential. Just like a space launch needs engineers, mathematicians, and physicists to work side by side to send astronauts to space, families, schools, and communities need to form partnerships for all children to have the opportunity to succeed. Strengthening family, school, and community bonds is a critical factor in raising student achievement, closing achievement gaps, and attaining school improvement goals. Research shows that engaged families and communities have a positive impact on students' academic achievement, aspirations, and well-being. Research also shows that family engagement and community engagement improves school climate and teacher satisfaction and retention, and is a common feature of high-performing schools. Most importantly, family engagement benefits all students regardless of their family income, education, or background.

Family engagement is not a one-size-fits-all approach. Families come in many different configurations, have different work schedules, speak many languages, and have different past experiences with schooling. Some parents have said they lack the resources to help their child, and some express frustration with school bureaucracies or policies they find hard to understand or change. Fortunately, teachers, administrators, and support staff can take steps to reach out, partner with, and engage with students' families, but they need to employ a wide range of skills to do so. This micro-credential stack is designed to promote the development of these much needed skills.

Trusting Reciprocal Relationships through Home Visits

Relationships among families, schools, and communities are at the heart of any family engagement endeavor. Relationships require trust, good intentions, and regular communication. There are many ways to develop trusting relationships with families, and home visits are one. Home visits can be done in-person at a family's home, in the community, or even virtually.

Gather Information

Before going on a home visit, it's important to plan for what you will do:
● Talk with your administration about your plan
● Decide which families you might want to visit

- Call each student's home and explain the purpose of the visit
- Schedule the visit
- Confirm the day of the visit
- Preplan your questions
- If you are conducting a virtual home visit, make sure you determine if a translator is needed (do not use a student)

During the home visit:
- Make eye contact.
- Thank families for inviting you into their space.
- Take notes only in follow-up visits, not during the first one.
- Begin the conversation with a question focused on the student; e.g. What are your hopes and dreams for your child?

Analyze
After you complete the home visit, be sure to:
- Send a personal thank you note.
- Invite the family to the next family event at school or in your classroom.
- Think about what you learned. What are the family's hopes for their child? What is something new that you learned?

Apply
It's important to take what you've learned during your home visit and apply it to your teaching practice.

Perhaps on your visit you learned that the family has a pet. Can you integrate family knowledge of pets into your curriculum in some way? Can families come to do a guest presentation on pet care?

Or perhaps you learned that families find homework assignments difficult because of poor internet speed. Can you modify at-home assignments, so that they are more paper-based?

Supporting Research

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Epstein, J. L. (2005). Developing and sustaining research-based programs of school, family, and community partnerships: Summary of five years of NNPS research. Center on School, Family, and Community Partnerships, National Network of Partnership Schools (NNPS), Johns Hopkins University.

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Redford, J., Huo, H., & McQuiggan, M. (January 2019). Barriers to parent-school involvement for early elementary students. U.S. Department of Education.
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https://nces.ed.gov/pubs2017/2017165.pdf

Stem Next. San Diego (2019). Changing the game in STEM with family engagement: A white paper for practitioners and field leaders to empower families in STEM.

https://43ot971vwwe7okplr1iw2ql1-wpengine.netdna-ssl.com/wp-content/uploads/2019/10/Changing-the-Game-in-STEM-with-Family-Engagement_Final_.pdf

Wood, L., Bauman, B., Rudo, Z., & Dimock, V. (February, 2017). How family, school, and community engagement can improve student achievement and influence school reform. Nellie Mae Education Foundation, Washington, D.C.

https://www.nmefoundation.org/resources/how-family-school-and-community-engagement-can-improve-student-achievement-and-influence-school-reform/

Resources

TED Talks on Family Visits:

Benefits of Home Visits

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HDzCSNLT8Hw

Rita Pierson: Every Child needs a Champion

https://www.ted.com/talks/rita_pierson_every_kid_needs_a_champion/transcript?language=en

Research-based Home Visits. Improve student-Teacher Connections

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=C0Zht86pskQ

Articles
Research Spotlight on Home Visits

http://www.nea.org/tools/16935.htm

Home Visits 101/ Edutopia

https://www.edutopia.org/article/home-visits-101-cristina-santamaria-graff

General Family Engagement Resources

Culturally Responsive Practices Courses and Modules. Ohio Department of Education

https://ohiohcrc.org/crp

ED's Dual-Capacity Framework

https://www2.ed.gov/documents/family-community/partners-education.pdf

Global Family Research Project
https://globalfrp.org/Articles

Learning Heroes
https://bealearninghero.org/

NAFSCE Resource Library

https://nafsce.org/page/ResourceLibrary/#/?t=all&to=all&ty=all&py=all&ln=all&page=0

New Dual-Capacity Building Framework

https://www.dualcapacity.org/

Ohio Statewide Family Engagement Center

https://ohiofamiliesengage.osu.edu/

Reframing Family, School, and Community Engagement: A communications toolkit

https://www.frameworksinstitute.org/toolkits/reframing-family-school-and-community-engagement/

School Community Journal

http://www.schoolcommunitynetwork.org/SCJ.aspx

Submission Guidelines & Evaluation Criteria

To earn this micro-credential, you must receive a passing score in Parts 1 and 3, and receive proficient for all components in Part 2.

Part 1. Overview Questions

200-400 words

Please answer the following contextual questions to help our assessor understand your current situation. Please do not include any information that will make you identifiable to your reviewers.

1. Why did you choose to complete this micro-credential? What are your professional goals for family engagement?
2. What is the demographic make-up of your classroom? Please include free and reduced lunch rate; ethnicity; special needs; second language learners; and any other important information.
3. How do you think earning this micro-credential will improve your classroom learning environment?

- **Passing:** Response provides reasonable and accurate information that justifies the choice of this micro-credential to address specific needs of both the teacher and the student. Educators include a learning goal that describes what they hope to gain from earning this micro-credential.

Part 2. Work Examples / Artifacts

To earn this micro-credential, please submit the following three artifacts as evidence of your learning. Please do not include any information that will make you or your students identifiable to your reviewers.

Artifact 1: Pre Visit Plans
(1500–2000 words)
Choose three students for a family visit in partnership with another educator, and answer the following questions for each one.
1. Why did you choose this student's family?
2. How did you determine the best time and place to visit?
3. Will you need an interpreter? (Do not use the student)
4. Will another educator accompany you?
5. Will you be meeting in the family's home or somewhere in the neighborhood?
6. How will you use this opportunity to build a relationship, extend support, and actively listen to parents' concerns and insights?
7. What will your conversation starter question be?

Artifact 2: Family Visit Summaries
(1500–2000 words)
After conducting the home visits, summarize your findings for each student. Your summaries need to include the

following information:
1. What was the perceived comfort level of the families? Did they warm to you by the end of the meeting, or will you need to continue to build trust?
2. What was your comfort level for this meeting?
3. What did you learn about this family?
4. What did you learn about your student?
5. How will this impact how you perceive this student?
6. How will this impact how you teach this student and/or other students in your classroom?

Artifact 3: Post Visits
Write and upload a personal thank you note to the families, and add an invitation to a classroom or school event. You will need to upload all three notes.

Artifact	Proficient	Basic	Developing
Artifact 1: Pre-visit Plans	Three students were chosen. All questions were addressed completely. Included evidence that the educator worked with the families to choose a comfortable time and place for the meeting. Explanation includes specific strategies to put families at ease and build trust. Opening question was open ended, warm and positive.	Fewer than three students were chosen or Not all questions were addressed or Evidence of accommodating the families' needs is missing or Explanation did not include specific strategies to put families at ease.	Fewer than three students were chosen and Response to questions was minimal.
Artifact 2: Family Visit Summaries	All questions are answered for all students fully and completely. Includes evidence that the educator reflected deeply on the home visits . Explanations show that the home visits have shifted the educator's perceptions and/or this experience will impact classroom practices.	Not all questions were answered for all three students or Reflection lacks depth or Explanations lack evidence of impact on perceptions or classroom practice.	Not all questions were answered for all three students and Reflection lacks depth and Explanations lack evidence of impact on perceptions or classroom practice.
Artifact 3: Post Visits	Three thank you notes were uploaded	Fewer than three thank you notes were uploaded	Fewer than three thank you notes were

		uploaded
Each thank you note was professional, and included a personal note/detail about the experience.

Each thank you note included an invitation for a follow-up activity or visit. | or

Thank you notes were identical to each other and didn't include a personal note/detail about the experience

or

Invitation for a follow-activity or visit was missing on one or all of the notes. | and

Thank-you notes were identical to each other and didn't include a personal note/detail about the experience

and

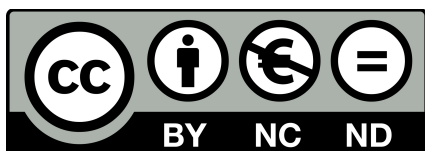Invitation for a follow-activity or visit was missing on one or all of the notes. |

Reflection

200-400 words

Please answer the following reflective questions. Please do not include any information that will make you identifiable to your reviewers.

1. How would you describe this experience to another educator?
2. How will you build home visits into your future classroom practice?
3. What were the students' reactions to the visits?

- **Passing:** Reflection provides evidence that this activity has had a positive impact on both educator practice and student success. Specific examples are cited to support claims. Also included are specific actionable steps that demonstrate how new learning will be integrated into future practices.