

Family Support NEWS BRIEF

A publication of

 CENTER FOR SCHOOLS AND COMMUNITIES



Cultivating Parent Leadership in Family Support Programs

Family support professionals engage with parents on a regular basis. We support them to learn more about child development, parenting strategies, and community resources that result in gaining skills and knowledge to improve the well-being of their families. How can we help these parents recognize that they are leaders in their families and encourage them to become leaders in our programs and the community? The work we do promotes leadership skills in the parents. A very simple definition of leading is to cause a person to go with one by holding them by the hand. (Define Lead - Google Search, n.d.) Using that definition, it's easy to see how a parent leads a child and is the leader of their family.

We know that parents participate more when they themselves or other parents have taken part in the planning of an event. The FRIENDS National Center tells

us, "Parent leadership is successfully achieved when parents and practitioners build effective partnerships based upon mutual respect and shared responsibility, expertise, and leadership in the decisions being made that affect their own families, other families, and their communities ... Parent education and support programs are good first steps in fostering leadership in parents. They provide parents with the tools they need to become more confident parents and to bond with other parents." ("Parent Leadership," n.d.).

The next step is helping parents acknowledge that they are becoming leaders. We can help them with this by recognizing or identifying that they are acting as a leader within their family. In an article titled "Defining Parent Leadership and Organizing" by the NYU Center for Policy, Research, and Evaluation, they state, "Recognizing

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caregiving as an act and extension of Leadership” (Defining Parent Leadership and Organizing | NYU Steinhardt, n.d.) as a key feature of models, strategies, and approaches to parent leadership, it’s important to also recognize the leadership skills they are using when advocating for their child at school, with medical professionals, or even in recreation activities such as with sports teams. Helping a parent see how they are becoming a leader in even these small interactions can go a long way toward building confidence in their leadership skills.

The next and more difficult step is helping parents step into more formal leadership roles. Asking parents to take part in smaller, less time-consuming roles, such as running a single planning session for a parent-focused event, is a good way to start this process. There are also many formalized programs and plans for parent leadership; here are a few:

- Wherever parents are in their leadership journey, recognize and celebrate them. February is National Parent Leadership Month. [Learn more at the CTF Alliance.](#)
- [Families First has resources around their Parent Leadership Program.](#)
- [The Center for the Study of Social Policy has information about their Parent Leader Network.](#)

Sources

Define lead—Google Search. (n.d.). Retrieved January 13, 2025, from https://www.google.com/search?q=define+lead&sca_esv=8bff9d870f7dc59b&rlz=1C1RXQR_enUS1110US1110&ei=x1fZ_7IK_u1ptQP6I7--AI&ved=0ahUKEwi-5bWvp_OKAxX7mokEHWiHHy8Q4dUDCBA&uact=5&oq=define+lead&gs_lp=Egxnd3Mtd2l6LXNlcnAiC2RIZmluZSBsZWFkMgoQABiABBDGloFMgOQABiABBixAxhDGloFMggQABiABBixAzIFEAAyAQYBRAAGIAEMgUQABiABDIKEAAyAQYQxiKBTIKEAAyAQYQxiKBTIFEAAyAQYBRAAGIAESMciUL8GWL8GcAF4AZABAjgBW6ABW6oBATG4AQPIAQD4AQGYAgKgAmHCAgoQABiwAxjWBBhHwgINEAAyAQYsAMYQxiKBZgDAIlgGAZAGCplHATKgbB6AF&scient=gws-wiz-serp&safe=active&ssui=on

Defining Parent Leadership and Organizing | NYU Steinhardt. (n.d.). Retrieved January 13, 2025, from <https://steinhardt.nyu.edu/metrocenter/research-evaluation/defining-parent-leadership-and-organizing>

Parent Leadership. (n.d.). Friends NRC. Retrieved January 13, 2025, from <https://friendsnrc.org/parent-leadership/>

Child Welfare Capacity Building Collaborative

The Child Welfare Capacity Building Collaborative offers multiple resources highlighting family well-being topics and the activities and roles for family support organizations.

“[Building and Sustaining Collaborative Community Relationships](#)” focuses on the ways that child welfare and community-based organizations can work together effectively to support child and family well-being.

The Child Welfare Capacity Building Collaborative (Collaborative), a service of the [Children’s Bureau](#), is a partnership among three centers—the [Capacity Building Center for States](#) (Center for States), [Capacity Building Center for Tribes](#), and [Capacity Building Center for Courts](#).

CTF Expenditure Reports Reminder

1. Expenditure reports are due 30 days after the end of the quarter. For example, if a quarter ends on March 31, the expenditure report will be due on April 30.
2. Include match funds in expenditure reports.
3. Notify your assigned technical assistance provider and [Jennifer Esposito](#) before submitting a budget revision to the PA Family Support Data Collection System.



Upcoming Events

National Parent Leadership Month

February is National Parent Leadership Month! This is the time to celebrate the important role parents play in their homes and communities. How will your program be celebrating National Parent Leadership Month? [Visit CTF Alliance webpage for more information.](#)

PAT/CTF Joint Learning Community

February 27, 9:00 AM

Family Support Webinar: Best Practices for Engaging Male Caregivers

May 7

Pennsylvania Parents as Teachers Courses

[Virtual PAT Foundational 2](#)

[February 18-21](#)

Time: 9:00 AM ET

Instructors: Terry Wertman, Bethany Smith

[Virtual PAT Foundational and Model](#)

[Implementation](#)

[March 24-April 4](#)

Time: 9:00 AM ET

Instructors: Terry Wertman, Bethany Smith

[Virtual PAT Foundational](#)

[March 24-April 4](#)

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Parents as Teachers Place

2025 Parents as Teachers International Conference Call for Presentation Proposals

Proposal Deadline: February 21

Parents as Teachers invites you to submit a presentation proposal to the 2025 Parents as Teachers International Conference: the largest annual home-visiting conference for early childhood professionals!

The goal of the conference is to offer a wide range of topics on early childhood, family well-being, and community engagement.

[Visit the 2025 Parents as Teachers International Conference website for more information!](#) The in-person presentations will be held October 13-16, 2025, at the Puerto Rico Convention Center in San Juan, Puerto Rico!

Managing Visit Frequency

The frequency of home visits is the foundation for families achieving their desired outcomes. In determining the number of home visits, parent educators consider the number of stressors that families may have. Typically, families participate in one to two visits a month.

Here are some strategies and tips to maintain optimal visit frequency.

1. When scheduling, family support should work with families to select times. PAT Parent educators can utilize the Visit Tracker calendar as a tool to keep track of visits.
2. Frontload visits to assure meeting at least the minimum number of visits to accommodate unexpected schedule changes or cancellations.
3. Offer families the option of a virtual visit if in person is not possible.

For additional information, please see the Technical Assistance Brief, "Personal Visit Frequency: Intensity Matters," in OLIVER.



Family Support Team

Family Support at Center for Schools and Communities provides training and technical assistance to Parents as Teachers providers, Children's Trust Fund grantees, and the Strengthening Families Leadership Team.

[Alexia Brown](#)

Family Support Technical Assistance Coordinator
(717) 763-1661, ext. 146

[Jennifer Esposito](#)

Family Support Data Coordinator
(717) 763-1661, ext. 161

[Christine Felicetti](#)

Family Support Coordinator
717-763-1661, ext. 104

[Rijelle Kraft](#)

Family Support Managing Coordinator
(717) 763-1661, ext. 221

[Karen Shanoski](#)

Family Support and Community Engagement Director
(717) 763-1661, ext. 139

[Pennsylvania Parents as Teachers](#) at Center for Schools and Communities

[Pennsylvania Children's Trust Fund](#)

[Pennsylvania Strengthening Families](#)

Family Support at Center for Schools and Communities

275 Grandview Avenue
Suite 200, Camp Hill, PA 17011
(717) 763-1661

centerforschoolsandcommunities.org



Safe Kids Corner

National TV Safety Day is in February : TV and Furniture Tip-overs Safety for Little Kids

Kids were meant to run, jump, and climb. Parents were meant to make sure they don't get seriously injured while they're doing it. It is easy to prevent TV and furniture tip-overs in your home. Here are a few simple steps to ensure that kids can play, and parents don't have to worry.

Top Safety Tips to Avoid TV and Furniture Tip-Over

1. Mount flat screen TVs to the wall. Follow the manufacturer's instructions to ensure that you have a secure fit.
2. If you have a heavier, box-style cathode ray tube (CRT) TV, place it on a low, stable piece of furniture that can hold the TV's size and weight.
3. Use anti-tip brackets, braces or wall straps to secure furniture to the wall.
4. Install stops on dresser drawers to prevent them from being pulled all the way out. Multiple open drawers can cause the weight to shift, making it easier for a dresser to fall.
5. Keep heavier items on lower shelves and in lower drawers.
6. Avoid placing remote controls, food, toys, or other items in places where kids might be tempted to climb up or reach for them.

[Source: Safe Kids Worldwide](#)