



Family Engagement and Outreach

How ParentCorps approaches family engagement and outreach

Our mission at ParentCorps is to transform the pre-K experience by helping schools partner with families to build a future where all children thrive. We do this in partnership with schools like yours and hope to build on the incredible work that you already do.

Family engagement is central to our model. When parents are involved in their child's schooling, children are likely to do better. We have found that family engagement is most effective when it is authentic, transparent, and meets families where they are. **We see effective family engagement as:**

- **Linked to learning**
Engagement includes a focus on specific skills/activities families can use.
- **Interactive**
It includes opportunities for discussion, practicing new skills and providing feedback.
- **Developmental**
Engagement provides opportunities for families to grow in knowledge and skills.
- **Collective and collaborative**
Children's growth and development happen in partnership between families and educators/school staff.
- **Integrated**
It is built into a program's calendar or curriculum.
- **Sustained**
Engagement is ongoing, not one-off.

To support family engagement, **ParentCorps offers a parenting program that gives caregivers a safe, judgment-free space to gather, learn from one another, and not feel alone.** It hits all the elements of effective family engagement. One caregiver described it as "the support group I didn't know I needed." We want all pre-K caregivers at your school to have the opportunity to benefit from this program and would love your help in spreading the word.

Encouraging caregivers to attend takes consistent deliberate attention and is what we refer to as "outreach." Here we will outline several outreach strategies, but firmly believe that **the heart of outreach is the trust and relationships you've built with your families.** Many families will come to the parenting program simply because of the trust they have in you. To build on that trust, consider sharing good news with caregivers about their child throughout the year. This special, positive attention goes a long way.

ParentCorps' Outreach Strategies

» Beginning of the year:

- Encourage your principal/site leader to endorse ParentCorps as part of pre-K.
- Support and/or attend family engagement events and make sure families know that ParentCorps is coming. Some families are transitioning a child into pre-K for the first time which can cause a lot of anxiety. Being in community with other caregivers might help.
- If possible, advocate for food at your family engagement events. Food lifts spirits!
- Emphasize that ParentCorps is for anyone involved in the care of the pre-K child — including parents, grandparents, aunts, uncles, older siblings, etc.
- Get familiar with the topics in the session so you can speak specifically to what will be discussed. Child development, routines, the power of play, positive reinforcement and discipline choices are a few of the many topics covered.
- Know our tagline – “Come for the Strategies, Stay for the Community.” We feel that this captures the heart of the program.
- Make sure that the ParentCorps banner is hung in a prominent location.
- Distribute the ParentCorps outreach postcard.
- Think about opportunities to continue inviting caregivers to ParentCorps. Family-teacher conference days are great times to reinforce the program's importance.

» A month before your program starts:

- Make sure you know the date and time ParentCorps begins and remind caregivers when you see them.
- Have a schedule of the ParentCorps sessions handy. A template of the schedule can be downloaded from the ParentCorps Portal. Feel free to recommend specific sessions based on what you know about the caregivers.
- Remind caregivers about ParentCorps at drop off and pick up. Even better, give out snacks and/or ParentCorps swag when you remind them.
- Encourage families to attend at least one session so they can have the experience and decide whether to return.
- Distribute ParentCorps flyers in children's backpacks or hand them directly to a caregiver. Share program details on the virtual platforms and apps you use to communicate with families.

» During the program:

- Check in with caregivers about how they are experiencing the sessions.
- Remind caregivers about the sessions and make sure you know if a session is rescheduled. Communicate with your colleagues so that everyone has the most up to date information.

Thank you for spreading the word about this special program!