

Family-Provider Relationships in Early Care and Education



Overview of Content

- Brief Overview of Family-Provider Relationship Quality Project
- Development of a Conceptual Model of Family-Provider Relationships
 - Review of Conceptual Literature
 - Review of Empirical Literature
 - Presentation of the Conceptual Model
- Use of the Conceptual Model to:
 - Review Existing Measurement Tools and Standards
 - Discuss Implications for Technical Assistance

Overview of the Family-Provider Relationship Quality Project

Purpose: Development of a measure of provider practices that facilitate a positive family-provider relationship and ultimately positive outcomes for children and families.

- Both parent and provider perspectives will be captured.
- Measure will be applicable across all types of early care and education settings.
- Measure will include emphasis on attitudes, knowledge, and practices as well as an environmental checklist.



Development of a Conceptual Model of Family-Provider Relationships

Review of Conceptual Literature on Family-Provider Relationships

- Review and integration of existing conceptual and theoretical literature across fields (ECE, K-12, early intervention, health, social work)
- 46 articles reviewed
- 3 perspectives identified
 - Family support/family-centered care
 - Parent involvement/family involvement/family engagement
 - Family-sensitive caregiving

Conceptual Perspectives on Family-Provider Relationships in Early Care and Education

Provider sensitivity to needs of working families is component of quality ECE. Sensitivity to families' lives may enhance family-provider relationships, parent & child engagement, & well-being.

- Positive attitudes toward families
- Knowledge- about families
- Responsive practices (Communication; Flexibility & logistical support; Resource & Referral)

(Bromer, Paulsell, Porter, Weber, Henly, & Ramshuro, in press)

Family support/ Family-centered care

(early intervention, special education, health, social work, ECE, home visiting)

Parent involvement/family involvement/family engagement

(ECE, K-12)

Family-sensitive care

(child care, home-based care, ECE)

From: Plenary presentation on Family-Provider Relationships at 2010 CCPRC annual meeting; Bromer, Porter, & Forry

Providers aim to “support and strengthen family capacity to enhance child development”* and strong family-provider relationships are viewed as a mechanism for change. The family unit is seen as focus of services.

- Multilateral relationships
 - Relational /participatory practices
 - Social support
 - Strengths-based practices
 - Empowerment
 - Respect
 - Community-based
- (Dunst, 2002; Kagan & Weissbourd, 1994)

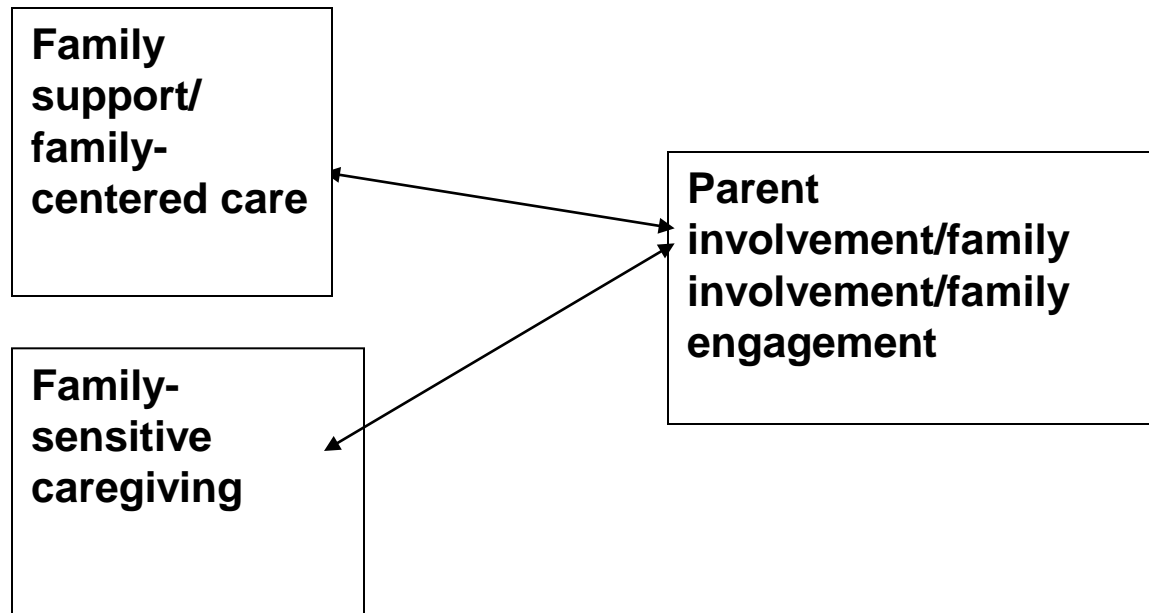
Providers view families as equal & reciprocal partners in supporting children's learning; relationships are vehicle for improving child outcomes.

- Defined roles
 - Decision making
 - Volunteering
 - Two-way communication
 - Shared responsibility
- (Halgunseth, Peterson, Stark, & Moodie, 2009; HFRP, 2010)

Common Elements across Perspectives

- Ecological perspective
- Child outcomes
- Family-related supports and outcomes
- Strengths-based
- Family-provider partnerships

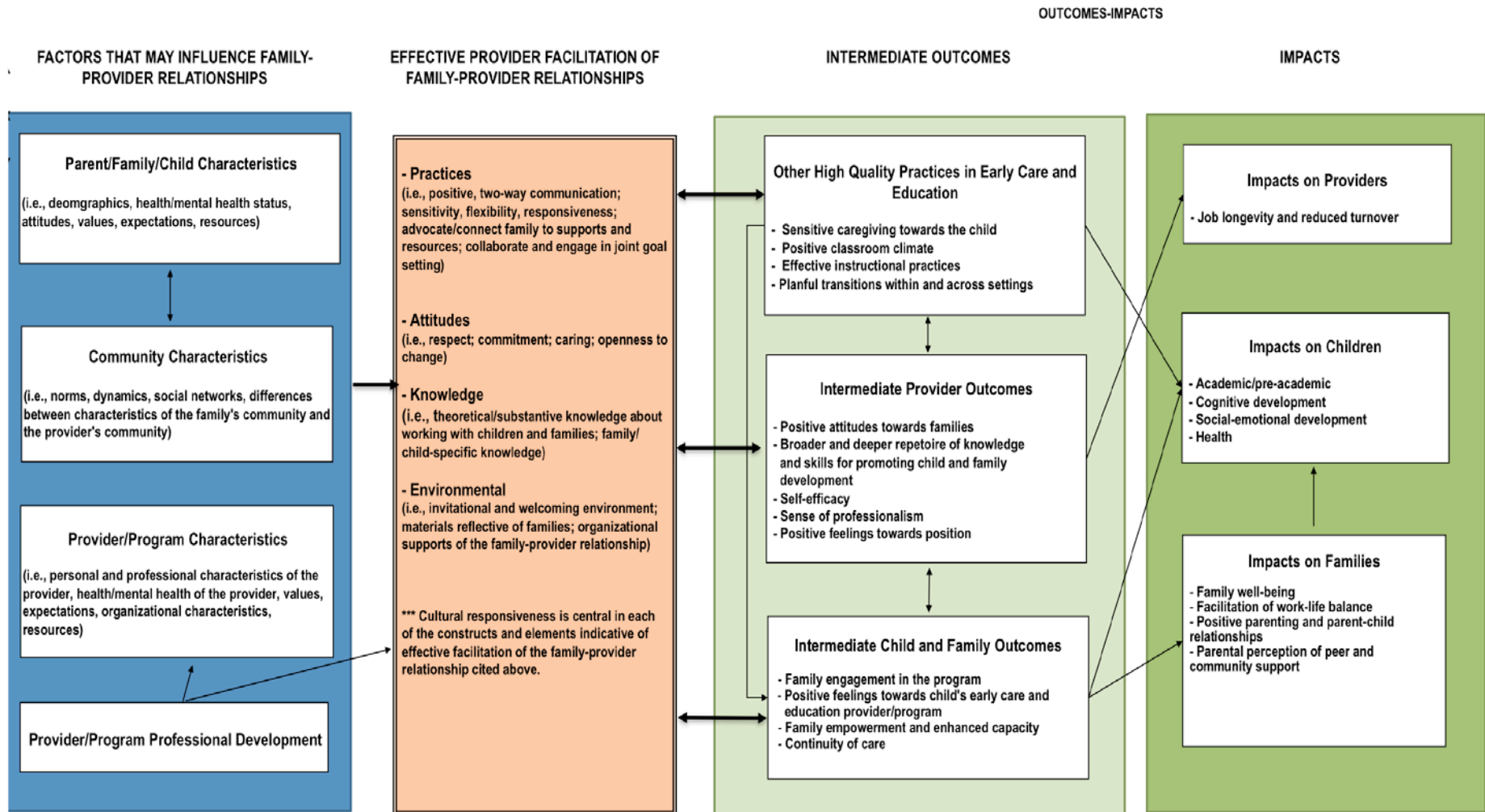
Relationships between Conceptual Perspectives on Family-Provider Relationships



Review of Empirical Literature Related to Family-Provider Relationships


- Reviewed literature from various fields: health, mental health, social work, family systems, early care and education, and K-12 education.
 - Samples represent parents (mostly mothers), home visitors, child care providers (center-based, family child care, and family/friend/neighbor), teachers, child protection service workers, and children.
 - Samples range in size from 7 to over 1,000, with the majority being between 25 and 200.

Conceptual Model Based on Conceptual and Empirical Review



Elements Indicative of Positive Family-Provider Relationships

Attitudes	Knowledge	Practices	Environmental
<p>Respect</p> <p>Commitment and caring</p> <p>Empowerment</p> <p>Openness to change</p> <p>Contextual perspective</p>	<p>Theoretical knowledge about working with children and families</p> <p>Family-specific knowledge</p>	<p>Relational practices (e.g., positive, two-way communication, sensitivity, flexibility)</p> <p>Goal-oriented practices (e.g., advocating, empowering, and connecting families to resources, joint goal setting)</p>	<p>Invitational and welcoming environment</p> <p>Materials reflective of families</p> <p>Systems or media for communication with families</p> <p>Provision of resources, information, and social networking</p>



Associations between Specific Elements of Positive Family-Provider Relationships and Outcomes for Children and Families

Children's Emotional Wellbeing

- Building stable, trustworthy family-provider relationship
- Having positive interactions with parents:
 - Positive communication between providers and parents
 - Validation and empathy for parents' experiences
- Providing information to parents in order to:
 - Improve parenting and problem solving
 - Help parents reframe issues and acknowledge children's achievements
- Advocating for parents

Children's Social Skills

- Engaging parents
 - Strengths-based parent involvement interventions
 - Engaging fathers
- Enhancing parent skills
 - Solution-focused services
 - Empowering parents and building collaborations with them
- Integrating services
- Offering services that are sensitive to families' culture and language

Children's Cognitive/Academic Skills

- Individualizing services
- Building collaborative relationships
 - Supporting parenting practices through responsive encouragement, warmth, and engaging the parent with the child in the home
- Integrating services to support parents through early care and education settings
- Engaging families
 - Family education activities and monthly parent workshops
 - Father sensitivity training, father support groups, volunteer opportunities for fathers in the classroom, and father-child recreational activities

Family Engagement

- Regularly communicating with families in their home language
- Including family members in goal setting and problem solving activities
- Building relationships with parents that are:
 - Strengths-based
 - Respectful of families' cultural backgrounds/practices
- Incorporating:
 - Parent skill development in classroom interventions
 - Integrated services for parents into early childhood settings
 - Concrete assistance for families such as providing referrals or coordinating services

Family Wellbeing

- Providing one-on-one support using a family-centered care model
- Empowering and supporting families
- Integrating services for families with a high degree of stress
- Establishing social networks for families

Enhanced Parent-Child Relationships

- Engaging families (including fathers and extended family members) in the program:
 - Building a trustworthy, stable, validating relationship with the parent
 - Post culturally-relevant materials in the care setting
 - Engaging parents in the children's learning through home activities
- Enhancing parenting, personal adaption, and communication skills through:
 - Workshops and/or in-home services
 - Emphasis of parent competencies
- Empowering families and children through:
 - Individualized services
 - Use a family-centered care model
 - Integration of services for parents
 - Strengths-based, solution-focused, family systems interventions

Family-Provider Relationship Measures Review

Structural Features	Content: Constructs and Elements
Field	Attitudes (e.g. respect)
Type	Knowledge (e.g. theoretical/substantive)
Respondent	Practices (e.g. relationship skills)
Setting	Environmental features (e.g. invitational and welcoming environment)
Age of child	
Language available	

Challenges

- Applicability across all early care and education settings
- Applicability across cultures
- Perspective
 - Focal child or all children
 - Parent or family
- Avoiding social desirability



Comparison of FPRQ Constructs and Selected Standards

FPRQ Construct: Knowledge	QRIS Indicator	NAEYC Criteria	NAFCC Criteria	Head Start Performance Standard
<p><i>Family-specific:</i></p>	<p>Families preferred means of communication are used (<i>Written communication</i>)</p> <p>Family needs assessment (<i>Parent surveys</i>)</p> <p>Group parent meetings based on needs and interests of parents (<i>Activities w/ families</i>)</p> <p>Meetings and events determined by family schedules (<i>Activities w/ families</i>)</p>	<p>7.A.02 a Program staff use a variety of formal and informal strategies to become acquainted with and learn from families about their family structure; their preferred child-rearing practices; and information families wish to share about their socioeconomic, linguistic, racial, religious, and cultural backgrounds.</p>	<p>5.22 The provider gathers information about the children and their families such as special needs, fears, food preferences, important holidays and traditions and updates the information as needed.</p>	<p>1304.40 a.1.Grantee and delegate agencies must engage in a process of collaborative partnership-building with parents to establish mutual trust and to identify family goals, strengths, and necessary services and other supports. This process must be initiated as early after enrollment as possible</p>

FPRQ Construct: Practices	QRIS Indicator	NAEYC Criteria	NAFCC Criteria	Head Start Performance Standard
<p><i>Positive Two-Way Communication</i></p>	<p>Families' preferred communication means are used (<i>Written communication</i>)</p> <p>Resources available to communicate with families in primary language (<i>Written communication</i>)</p> <p>Staff schedules allow meaningful communication with parents (<i>Written communication</i>)</p> <p>Parent Conferences</p>	<p>4.E.03</p> <p>a. Teachers, families, and relevant specialists have regular opportunities to participate in two-way communication conferences to discuss each child's progress, accomplishments, difficulties in the classroom and at home as well as to plan learning activities.</p>	<p>1.9 She is available to parents by telephone when children are present, or regularly checks for phone messages.</p> <p>5.1 The provider follows an enrollment process that facilitates an exchange of information between the provider and parent, working to assure a good match. Discussion includes a description of the program and policies as well as parents' values and wishes around such topics as eating, sleeping, toileting, and discipline.</p>	<p>Parent Interview: PDM 9.2 Do the Head Start/Early Head Start program staff communicate with you throughout the year? In what ways</p>

FPRQ Construct: Practices	QRIS Indicator	NAEYC Criteria	NAFCC Criteria	Head Start Performance Standard
<p><i>Advocate/ Connect family to supports/ resources</i></p>	<p>Helps families navigate resources; links families to resources; and provides direct advocacy <i>(Community resources lists)</i></p> <p>Relationships with public and community-based services e.g. health, education, social services <i>(Community resources lists)</i></p>	<p>8.A.01 a. Program staff maintain a current list of child and family support services available in the community based on the pattern of needs they observe among families and based on what families request. They share the list with families and assist them in locating, contacting, and using community resources that support children’s and families’ well-being and development.</p>		<p>1304.40b. 1. Grantee and delegate agencies must work collaboratively with all participating parents to identify and continually access, either directly or through referrals, services and resources that are responsive to each family's interests and goals.</p>

FPRQ Construct: Practices	QRIS Indicator	NAEYC Criteria	NAFCC Criteria	Head Start Performance Standard
<p><i>Collaborate and engage in joint goal-setting</i></p>	<p>Parent-teacher conferences</p>	<p>7.C.01 a. Program staff encourage families to regularly contribute to decisions about their child’s goals and plans.</p>	<p>1.13 Provider and parents work together on issues such as guidance /discipline, eating, toileting, etc</p>	<p>1304.40b. 1. Grantee and delegate agencies must work collaboratively with all participating parents to identify and continually access, either directly or through referrals, services and resources that are responsive to each family's interests and goals.</p>

FPRQ Construct: Environment	QRIS Indicator	NAEYC Criteria	NAFCC Criteria	Head Start Performance Standard
<p><i>Providing information about the program and community resources</i></p>	<p>Bulletin boards</p> <p>Community resources lists</p>	<p>8.A.01 a. Program staff maintain a current list of child and family support services available in the community based on the pattern of needs they observe among families and based on what families request.</p>	<p>5.12 The provider has information about community resources that offer services to parents and children.</p>	<p>1304.40.4. b.ii. Education and other appropriate interventions, including opportunities for parents to participate in including opportunities for parents to participate in counseling programs or to receive information on mental health issues that place families at risk, such as ...</p>

FPRQ Construct: Environment	QRIS Indicator	NAEYC Criteria	NAFCC Criteria	Head Start Performance Standard
<p><i>Providing social networking opportunities for families</i></p>	<p>Activities that encourage male participation and acknowledge that fathers are equally knowledgeable about their children <i>(Activities w/families)</i></p> <p>Group parent meetings based on needs and interests of parents <i>(Activities w/families)</i></p> <p>Events for parents to meet other parents <i>(Activities w/families)</i></p>	<p>7.A.12 a. The program facilitates opportunities for families to meet with one another on a formal and informal basis, work together on projects to support the program, and learn from and provide support for each other.</p>	<p>1.27 The provider and/or parents plan occasional activities where the child care families can get together <i>(All the families together)</i></p>	<p>1304.40. A variety of opportunities must be created by grantee and delegate agencies for interaction with parents throughout the year.</p>

Future Directions

- For development of family partnership standards
- For measurement
- For QRIS:
 - Informing families
 - Professional development for providers

For More Information

Family-Provider Relationships: A Multidisciplinary Review of High Quality Practices and Associations with Family, Child, and Provider Outcomes

http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/opre/cc/childcare_technical/reports/family_provider_multi.pdf

Other materials coming soon to...

http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/opre/other_resrch/fprq/index.html