



Engaging Families, Securing Housing

Engaging vulnerable families in the development of the services they need is linked to positive outcomes and improved family stability. However, effective engagement can be one of the most challenging activities for professionals working with families.

This resource provides solutions to step seven of our Child Welfare and Supportive Housing Roadmap: Engaging Families, Securing Housing & Facilitating Move-in. Be sure to check out CSH's Welcome Home: Design and Practice Guidance or Supportive Housing for Families with Children which contains important information and resources for engaging families.

Effectively Engaging Families

- **Meet parents where they are and offer concrete support.** Take the parent to fill out employment applications and prepare a one-pager with all the applicable information. Take them a lunch during their lunch break at work. Provide transportation to the grocery store and use the shopping time as an opportunity to talk.
- **Provide options and choice.** This allows parents to regulate their involvement from a place of strength, curiosity, or need.
- **Host Parent Cafes** to build on the protective factors of resilience, social connectedness, parent education and competence, material support, and emotional health of children.
- **Use Motivational Interviewing (MI)** and ensure it remains a core strategy for interacting with parents. MI is a low cost and proven strategy for engaging vulnerable individuals.
- **Establish a peer leadership program.** Create leadership opportunities for parents as they stabilize, such as weekly parent-led meetings supported by staff. Staff can help by co-creating a solution-focused agenda and by providing clear expectations and "rules" about group process (taking turns, encouraging empathy).
- **Offer space and time to community partners.** Encourage a variety of community organizations – job training, community college, cooking schools, mental health experts, stress management experts, art/music therapists, and others – to hold regular meetings on-site to offer variety, choice and convenience to parents.

Reference Documents

CSH Resources

- [CSH One Roof Family Supportive Housing Initiative](#)
- [8 Steps Roadmap to Supportive Housing & Child Welfare Partnerships](#)
- [CSH Family Resources](#)
- [Ensuring Family Voice While Navigating Multiple Systems: The Family Team Meeting Strategy in Supportive Housing](#)
- [Welcome Home: Design and Practice Guidance for Supportive Housing for Families with Children](#)
- [Interagency Collaboration: Moving the Needle on Supportive Housing & Child Welfare](#)
- [A Practice Framework for Delivering Services to Families in Supportive Housing](#)

Additional Resources

- [USICH Case Studies Demonstrating the Effectiveness of Supportive Housing for Families in the Child Welfare System](#)

For more info, contact us!

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This document is a product of CSH's Solutions for Vulnerable Families Learning Community and contains strategies that were shared by Learning Community members including, child welfare professionals, housing specialists, supportive housing providers and clinicians.