



Parents as Teachers™

## GROUP CONNECTION

*planning guide and record*

### Preparation

#### > Review:

- Previous group connection plans and records related to this format and topic
- Participant feedback and surveys
- Budgets
- Attendance records
- Program requirements

#### > Consider:

- Venue requirements, restrictions, and availability for setting up
- Family involvement factors such as schedule conflicts, refreshments, incentives, transportation, accessibility, and child care
- Time frames for purchasing and coordinating materials and refreshments
- Content of publicity and channels for getting the word out
- Facilitation materials that support the format and intended audience
- Supplies for participants and presenters (microphones, projectors, pens, craft materials, and so on)

# Preparation Checklist

### Intent

- Read **parent educator resources** relevant to the topic and the targeted age range.
- Choose **parent handouts** based on the topic, parents' previous requests for information, or child development.
- Prepare **rationale statements** for the activities and determine methods for sharing them, such as posters, signs, or handouts.

### Learning activities

- Prepare a written **agenda or schedule** (if appropriate) that includes the format, topic, ending time, and so on. For parent-child activities, plan a method for sharing this information (for example, do participants proceed from activity to activity at their leisure? Will there be free time followed by group participation?)
- Consider **placement of activities** based on the ages of the children attending, size of the room, safety considerations, and type of activity (water play, riding toys, book sharing).
- Plan for **set up and tear down** of activities based on when the venue is available, staffing, custodial help, transportation of materials, accessibility to entrance and exits, and loading zone restrictions.

### Facilitation methods

- Plan to **welcome** families with check-in tables, adequate staffing, signs, sign-in sheets, name tags or tents, places for coats, stroller parking, and an icebreaker activity (if appropriate).
- Prepare for **introductions or opening remarks** based on the format chosen, number of families expected, and the presenters or program personnel attending.
- Plan for **announcements and ground rules** (if appropriate).
- Prepare **discussion** based on the topic, area(s) of emphasis, child development, and parenting behaviors.
- Plan opportunities for parents to **process and apply information** by sharing their observations and perspectives, asking questions, and connecting the information with personal experiences.
- Plan to **summarize** the presentation (if applicable), allowing time for Q&A. Determine the method and timing for distributing **incentives or attendance prizes** and for offering **refreshments**. Remember to close by thanking everyone for attending and contributing.

### Documentation and evaluation

- Ask participants to complete an **evaluation** (include feedback forms from presenters or facilitators).
- Take photos or sketch drawings showing **placement of activities**.
- Retain** the presentation/discussion outline, slides, key messages shared, notes on the discussion, parent handout(s) or resource(s) provided, attendance sheet(s), and fliers used to advertise.
- Note what **worked well and what could be improved**.