Family Engagement Initiatives Update
American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) – Fall 2017

Family Engagement Background

While the AAP has a long history of engaging patients and families in its activities, more concerted efforts have taken place over the past several years with the inclusion of a family engagement measure on the AAP organization-wide Balanced Scorecard. Efforts around family engagement have been coordinated by 2 primary groups: (1) the Family Partnerships Network, and (2) a staff Family Engagement Workgroup. Below is an overview of each group as well as ideas for what your group can do related to family engagement.

Family Partnerships Network (FPN)

The Family Partnerships Network was officially established in May 2014 (the Y is capitalized to represent youth and young adults), and is designed to be a resource for Academy members regarding the importance of patient and family-centered care and the roles for families in health care and in health care redesign. The mission of the AAP FPN is to represent family and youth perspectives, lead and facilitate youth and family engagement, and support ongoing youth and family involvement at the local, state and national level.

The FPN is governed by an 8-member Executive Committee—including two youth/young adult representatives—which provides leadership to FPN activities. Current activities include the following:

- Chrissie Blackburn was recently appointed to the FPN Executive Committee. Chrissie, who has a child with special needs, serves as first Principal Advisor of Patient and Family Engagement at University Hospitals Rainbow Babies & Children’s Hospital.
- The FPN developed a video featuring the FPN Executive Committee. It will be shown during the Family Reception at the AAP National Conference & Exhibition (information below) and placed on the FPN web site.
- The Family Reception at the National Conference & Exhibition will take place on September 17, 2017 from 4:00–6:00 pm at the Marriott Marquis Chicago in the John Hancock room.
- The AAP Friends of Children-funded “Committees and Family Engagement (CAFÉ) Program” involves the addition of a family liaison to the following: AAP Committee on Hospital Care, AAP Committee on Pediatric Emergency Medicine, AAP Committee on Practice and Ambulatory Medicine, and AAP Committee on Psychosocial Aspects of Child and Family Health for 2 years. A survey was recently administered to these AAP committees to elicit feedback on their experiences with the initiative; a summary from same was shared with relevant groups.
- Several AAP Friends of Children projects were recently launched to enhance family engagement within the AAP. A virtual family advisory panel for HealthyChildren.org is being created and grants were provided to the AAP Puerto Rico, Maryland, Montana, New Hampshire and Florida chapters, respectively, to enhance family engagement efforts. A

AAP FAMILY ENGAGEMENT PRINCIPLES

1. The family is the principal caregiver and the center of strength and support for children.

2. The AAP recognizes that perspectives and information provided by families, children, adolescents, and young adults are essential components of collaborative decision-making in the delivery of high-quality, safe, and compassionate care. Patients and their families are integral partners of the health care team.

3. The AAP recognizes the value of diversity among patients, families, and pediatricians. The delivery of care within the context of appropriate physician knowledge, understanding, and appreciation of cultural and population distinctions take into account families’ experiences, beliefs, values actions, customs, and unique health care needs.

4. Recognizing, valuing, and building on the strengths of individual children and families and empowering them to discover and communicate their own strengths, build confidence, and partner in making choices and decisions about their health care is vital to optimal health and development.

5. To promote improved patient, family, and physician experiences and outcomes, the AAP encourages and supports family engagement in its core competencies of education, practice, research, and advocacy.
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A kick-off call with the chapters was recently held and a check in call will take place in October.

- A webinar about youth engagement in pediatrics is being planned for the late fall. Details will follow.

Additional information about the FPN can be found at [www.aap.org/fpn](http://www.aap.org/fpn).

**Staff Family Engagement Work Group**

This group includes staff representatives from nearly every AAP department who meet monthly to advance efforts related to AAP objectives on family engagement and to share information and resources. One of the FPN co-chairpersons also participates in monthly meetings to ensure coordination of activities. The activities of the workgroup outlined below aid the AAP in achieving the following 3 family engagement objectives:

- Increase family engagement throughout the work of the AAP
- Optimize preparation of family leaders and volunteers for involvement in AAP work
- Equip staff with knowledge, tools, resources and information to support AAP leaders in efforts to increase family engagement in AAP work

**Workgroup Activities**

- As part of its strategic plan, the Staff Family Engagement Work Group has formed the following subgroups to work on several family engagement initiatives:
  - A subgroup on consumer products. The consumer products subgroup recently created a form to elicit feedback from family representatives asked to review AAP publications. A Healthychildren.org virtual parent panel was also recently formed and staff are brainstorming ways to engage panel participants.
  - A subgroup to assist with Continuing Medical Education family engagement efforts. Work group members participated in a Committee on Continuing Medical Education meeting where they presented on family engagement activities and brainstormed ideas for increasing family engagement in educational activities.
  - A subgroup focused on identifying ways that families can be engaged in the process of policy development and review.
- Workgroup members conducted outreach to AAP section managers to gauge interest in a family engagement presentation and brainstorming session with their executive committees. After this outreach, several section managers expressed interest in the opportunity.
- Workgroup members continue to meet with staff from a number of departments to discuss family engagement efforts. Staff from the Department of Publishing attended a Staff Family Engagement Work Group meeting to provide an overview of a new family engagement section in *Pediatrics*. Articles published in this section of the journal are written collaboratively by a family partner and healthcare provider.

**What You Can Do**

- Think about opportunities to expand family engagement in your division and/or department and reach out to the staff Family Engagement Work Group to share your ideas. Work group members are available to support and assist you in expanding your family engagement efforts.
- Reach out to the FPN and/or the staff Family Engagement Workgroup for advice or consultation.

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