Sample Family Survey for Pyramid Model Early Care and Education Programs

Engaging with families is an essential component of implementing the Pyramid Model. One way programs can engage with families is to ask for their opinions and ideas through a survey. This resource provides sample survey items for programs to understand the experiences and perceptions of families. The survey items consider both classroom and program-wide Pyramid Model practices. Surveying families in early childhood education and care programs on Pyramid Model implementation provides a wide range of benefits:

- **Improving family partnership:** Surveys can facilitate two-way communication and foster trust and collaboration between families, early childhood programs, and providers.
- **Understanding family needs and preferences:** Programs can learn more about family perceptions, beliefs, and children's social-emotional support and well-being.
- **Building inclusive practices:** The commitment to belonging and inclusion is foundational in implementing the Pyramid Model. Family surveys can provide knowledge and information, enabling educators to use inclusive practices that value diverse family experiences and better support all children's learning and development.
- **Program improvement:** Feedback from families can help improve the implementation of social-emotional practices and assist the program in better meeting the needs of the community.

Programs are encouraged to customize the survey to fit their program and evaluation needs. One way to achieve this is for the program leadership team to dedicate time to identifying the purpose of using the survey; in other words, what does the program want to know more about? For example, one program might consider the purpose of their family survey to learn more about family perceptions of classroom social-emotional practices. Another program's purpose for the survey might be to examine how confident families are in using Pyramid Model strategies at home and in the community and identify additional needs of families. Once the purpose of the survey is clearly defined, programs can review the following sample survey items, making careful adjustments and customizations to develop a set of items that align with the information they hope to gather from the survey. For example, programs might use different terminology (e.g., providers or teachers), add questions about additional services or activities (e.g., Positive Solutions for Families), or shorten the survey.

Considerations for family surveys:

Make it Accessible:

- Distribute the survey in the language(s) families read.
- While open-ended questions (i.e., questions where the respondent can write in an answer) can provide valuable information, they can be time-consuming to answer and require more effort than questions that ask you to select a choice.
- Provide online and offline options, including mobile-friendly online surveys and paper surveys families can take home to complete. Ensure that your paper copies use accessible fonts like Calibri or Arial.
- Consider providing devices in your program for families who might not have readily accessible internet access.
- If you create new items, use plain language so families understand your questions.

Respect Anonymity:

- Allow families to answer anonymously to encourage honest and open responses.

Communicate Effectively:

- Use family-friendly language.
- Clearly state the deadline for completing the survey.
- Send reminders or notifications before the completion deadline.
- Respect the decision of those who do not wish to participate.

Include Families:

- Include family members in the decision-making process when developing survey items.
- Share a summary of the results using a family-friendly method.
- Explain how the program will use the feedback from the survey for improvement.

Sample Family Survey Items for Pyramid Model Early Care and Education Programs

1. **My child is learning how to identify emotions.**

   ○ *Strongly Disagree* ○ *Disagree* ○ *Agree* ○ *Strongly Agree* ○ *Don't Know*

2. **My child is learning how to express emotions.**

   ○ *Strongly Disagree* ○ *Disagree* ○ *Agree* ○ *Strongly Agree* ○ *Don't Know*

3. **My child is learning how to calm down when they have strong emotions.**

   ○ *Strongly Disagree* ○ *Disagree* ○ *Agree* ○ *Strongly Agree* ○ *Don't Know*

4. **My child has formed positive and meaningful friendships with other children (e.g., names friends, is greeted by other children when arriving, plays with other children outside).**

   ○ *Strongly Disagree* ○ *Disagree* ○ *Agree* ○ *Strongly Agree* ○ *Don't Know*

5. **My child is learning how to cooperate with other children by using skills like taking turns and resolving conflicts when they happen.**

   ○ *Strongly Disagree* ○ *Disagree* ○ *Agree* ○ *Strongly Agree* ○ *Don't Know*

6. **I am comfortable with how staff in the program respond to children's challenging behaviors.**

   ○ *Strongly Disagree* ○ *Disagree* ○ *Agree* ○ *Strongly Agree* ○ *Don't Know*

7. **The program prioritizes keeping my child at school and does not ask us to pick them up or keep them home due to their use of challenging behaviors.**

   ○ *Strongly Disagree* ○ *Disagree* ○ *Agree* ○ *Strongly Agree* ○ *Don't Know*

8. **My child's teacher offers opportunities to participate in the classroom (e.g., volunteering, special event planning, observing).**

   ○ *Strongly Disagree* ○ *Disagree* ○ *Agree* ○ *Strongly Agree* ○ *Don't Know*

9. **When I visit the classroom, it feels safe, secure, calm, and predictable.**

   ○ *Strongly Disagree* ○ *Disagree* ○ *Agree* ○ *Strongly Agree* ○ *Don't Know*

10. **The classroom, materials, and activities represent our family's culture (e.g., ethnicity, language, composition**

    ○ *Strongly Disagree* ○ *Disagree* ○ *Agree* ○ *Strongly Agree* ○ *Don't Know*

11. **The classroom has activities that my child enjoys and looks forward to.**

    ○ *Strongly Disagree* ○ *Disagree* ○ *Agree* ○ *Strongly Agree* ○ *Don't Know*

12. **My child's teacher says nice and kind things about my child often.**

    ○ *Strongly Disagree* ○ *Disagree* ○ *Agree* ○ *Strongly Agree* ○ *Don't Know*

13. **The communication from my child's teacher is mostly about positive events and celebrations in the classroom versus concerns.**

○ *Strongly Disagree* ○ *Disagree* ○ *Agree* ○ *Strongly Agree* ○ *Don't Know*

14. **My child's teacher asks me what our family thinks is important for our child's social, emotional, and behavioral growth.**

○ *Strongly Disagree* ○ *Disagree* ○ *Agree* ○ *Strongly Agree* ○ *Don't Know*

15. **I feel welcome in the program.**

○ *Strongly Disagree* ○ *Disagree* ○ *Agree* ○ *Strongly Agree* ○ *Don't Know*

16. **The program staff (e.g., Director, Therapists, Administrative Assistant) greet me by name.**

○ *Strongly Disagree* ○ *Disagree* ○ *Agree* ○ *Strongly Agree* ○ *Don't Know*

17. **The program staff greets my child by name.**

○ *Strongly Disagree* ○ *Disagree* ○ *Agree* ○ *Strongly Agree* ○ *Don't Know*

18. **I have opportunities to be involved in program activities (outside of the classroom).**

○ *Strongly Disagree* ○ *Disagree* ○ *Agree* ○ *Strongly Agree* ○ *Don't Know*

19. **The program staff value my ideas.**

○ *Strongly Disagree* ○ *Disagree* ○ *Agree* ○ *Strongly Agree* ○ *Don't Know*

20. **The program staff considers my input when making decisions about the program.**

○ *Strongly Disagree* ○ *Disagree* ○ *Agree* ○ *Strongly Agree* ○ *Don't Know*

When Challenging Behavior Occurs

21. **When my child has challenging behavior, their teacher or a program staff member (e.g., mental health specialist, therapist, behavior specialist) partners with our family to figure out what to do, make a plan, and communicate regularly about how the plan works.**

○ *Not Applicable*

○ *Strongly Disagree* ○ *Disagree* ○ *Agree* ○ *Strongly Agree* ○ *Don't Know*

22. **The program prioritizes finding solutions to challenging behaviors with our family rather than considering asking our child to stay home or find a new placement.**

○ *Not Applicable*

○ *Strongly Disagree* ○ *Disagree* ○ *Agree* ○ *Strongly Agree* ○ *Don't Know*

23. **My child's teachers ask me how I support my child with challenging behaviors at home.**

○ *Not Applicable*

○ *Strongly Disagree* ○ *Disagree* ○ *Agree* ○ *Strongly Agree* ○ *Don't Know*

24. My child's teachers share helpful ideas I can use with my child.

- ○ *Not Applicable*
- ○ *Strongly Disagree* ○ *Disagree* ○ *Agree* ○ *Strongly Agree* ○ *Don't Know*

25. My child's teacher or program staff have provided me with resources or services that could help our family.

- ○ *Not Applicable*
- ○ *Strongly Disagree* ○ *Disagree* ○ *Agree* ○ *Strongly Agree* ○ *Don't Know*

26. What three things did your child learn at our program that you are most pleased about?

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

27. Is there anything else you'd like to share about your family's experience with the program?

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

The reproduction of this document is encouraged. Permission to copy is not required. If modified or used in another format, please cite original source. This is a product of the National Center for Pyramid Model Innovations and was made possible by Cooperative Agreement #H326B220002 which is funded by the U.S. Department of Education, Office of Special Education Programs. However, those contents do not necessarily represent the policy of the Department of Education, and you should not assume endorsement by the Federal Government.

Pub: 07/10/24