

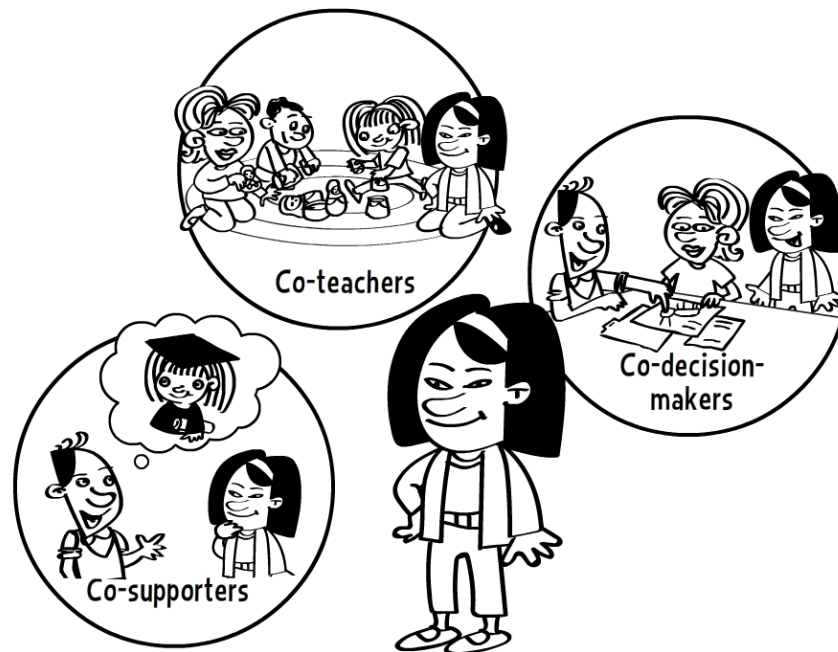
Being Responsive to Children and Families: *Engaging Families*

**WHAT'S IN THIS PD2GO PACK?**

Engaging families to support children's learning has many benefits. This pack offers strategies to engage families as active partners and decision-makers in their children's early learning experiences.

**Your Participants Will...**

increase their capacity to engage families as partners and decision-makers to support and enhance learning experiences for young children.



**SUPPORTING MATERIALS**

**Facilitator's Guide** Everything you need to facilitate this PD2GO presentation on *Engaging Families*, including an interactive presentation page along with step-by-step presenter's notes.

**Coaching Corner** One-page resource with self-reflection and practice opportunities that can be explored individually, with peers, and in professional development sessions.


Additional resource materials related to this pack provide opportunities to explore and expand your skills and knowledge through **Digging Deeper**, **Resource Links**, and **Family Connections**.

## HOW TO USE THIS FACILITATOR'S GUIDE

This Facilitator's Guide will provide you with step-by-step information on how to present this session using the interactive presentation page and downloadable materials specific to this PD2GO pack. We recommend [opening the pack presentation](#) as you go through this Facilitator's Guide.

### Presentation Information

*Text written in italics is meant to be spoken out loud during the course of the presentation.*

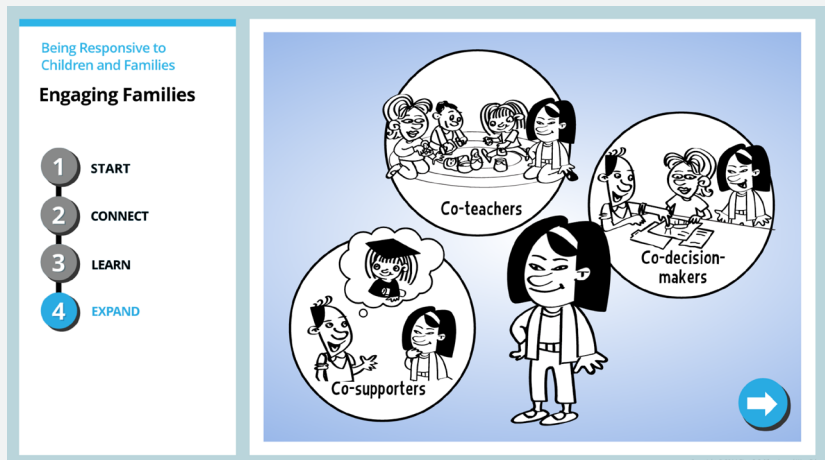
Other text, marked with this icon , offers important information such as instructions or suggested answers to facilitate the presentation of this PD2GO pack.

### THE INTERACTIVE PRESENTATION PAGE

The presentation page includes the following elements:

#### ■ Steps

Click on each number icon to begin the section of the presentation—use the presenter's notes in this guide to facilitate each step of the presentation



### DOWNLOADABLE MATERIALS

#### ■ In This Pack

Click on the downloadable materials hyperlink to access all materials related to this presentation.

#### ■ In This Bundle

Click on the downloadable materials hyperlink to access all additional resources and materials that can be used with this presentation and other related packs.




### EXPANDING ON THIS PD2GO PACK

This presentation on *Engaging Families* can be used individually or in conjunction with related packs in the bundle, including *Culturally Responsive Practices* and *Responsive Learning Experiences*. Additional resources and materials in this bundle (*Digging Deeper*, *Resource Links*, and *Family Connections*) are designed to extend skills and knowledge around these related packs, provide links to resources, and promote partnerships with families.

### MATERIALS




In this pack, you will find:

[Download all \(3.7 MB\)](#)

-  [Facilitator's Guide \(3.9 MB\)](#)  
Everything you need to facilitate this PD2GO presentation on Engaging Families, including an interactive presentation page along with step-by-step presenter's notes.
-  [Coaching Corner \(160 KB\)](#)  
One-page resource with self-reflection and practice opportunities that can be explored individually, with peers, and in professional development sessions.
-  [Handout - Engaging Families in Donita's Classroom \(160 KB\)](#)

In this bundle, you will find:

[Download all \(280 KB\)](#)


- Additional resource materials related to this pack provide opportunities to explore and expand your skills and knowledge. The resources include:
-  [Digging Deeper \(150 KB\)](#)
  -  [Family Connections \(210 KB\)](#)
  -  [Resource Links \(170 KB\)](#)

**STEP 1:**  
**START**



**PRESENTATION SEQUENCE**

**FACILITATOR'S NOTES**

Step 1



Let's try an activity two ways.

[5 min]



**Step 1 - Start**

**Facilitator:** *Let's try an activity two ways. Turn to a partner, and decide who will be the leader and who will be the follower.*



Ask the followers to take out a pencil and paper. Be sure to have extra pencils and paper available in case participants do not have these materials.

Ask the followers to turn their backs to the screen.




**Facilitator:** *Leaders, read these directions to guide the follower in drawing a house.*



Give participants time to read the directions and draw the house. When participants complete this task, invite the followers to face the screen again.

**Directions**

1. Draw a square.
2. Draw a triangle connected to the top of the square.
3. Draw two smaller square windows inside the top half of the square.
4. Draw a rectangle door inside the square connected to the bottom.



**Facilitator:** *Now let's try a different approach.*





**Facilitator:** *Take a minute to design a house together. Decide on some of its features, for example, the number of bedrooms, a pool, a porch. Draw a quick sketch.*



Give participants time to quickly design and sketch a house.

Take a minute to design a house together.









**Facilitator:** *How did the process of drawing a house feel different the second time around when you were able to think and make decisions together?*







Ask for participants to share their ideas.

**STEP 1:** *Continued*  
**START**

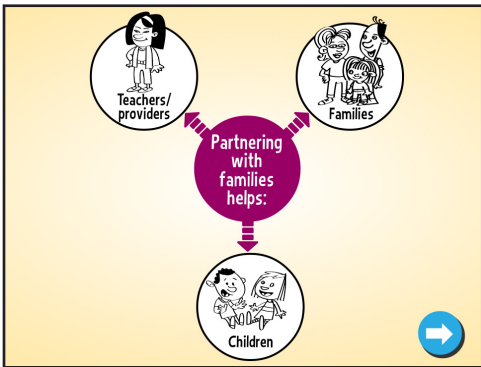
PRESENTATION SEQUENCE	FACILITATOR'S NOTES
<div data-bbox="99 940 578 1318" style="border: 1px solid red; padding: 10px; text-align: center;">  <p><b>Collaboration is key to engaging families.</b></p>  <p style="background-color: #4a7ebb; color: white; padding: 2px 5px; display: inline-block; border-radius: 5px;">Go to step 2: CONNECT</p> </div>	<div data-bbox="721 331 786 394" style="float: left; margin-right: 10px;">  </div> <p>Possible responses include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Partners feel more like equals when they collaborate in designing and sketching the house.</li> <li>■ It's more engaging, interesting, creative, and fun to work together.</li> </ul> <p><b>Facilitator:</b> <i>How is this activity like engaging families?</i></p> <div data-bbox="721 730 786 793" style="float: left; margin-right: 10px;">  </div> <p>Ask for participants to share their ideas. Possible responses include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Rather than telling families what they can and should do, collaborating with families helps everyone be more engaged, interested, and creative.</li> <li>■ Teachers/providers and families make better decisions when they work together to support children.</li> </ul> <div data-bbox="646 1129 769 1184" style="float: left; margin-right: 10px;"> <p>CLICK </p> </div> <p><b>Facilitator:</b> <i>Collaboration is key to engaging families.</i></p>

**STEP 2:**  
**CONNECT**

PRESENTATION SEQUENCE	FACILITATOR'S NOTES
<div data-bbox="99 1577 578 1955" style="border: 1px solid green; padding: 10px;"> <p>Step <span style="background-color: #4a7ebb; color: white; padding: 2px 5px; border-radius: 5px;">2</span></p>  <p><b>When you partner with families, you open opportunities for learning experiences that reflect families' hopes and dreams.</b></p>  <div data-bbox="516 1900 558 1955" style="float: right; background-color: #4a7ebb; color: white; padding: 5px 10px; border-radius: 5px;">→</div> </div>	<p>[1 min] <span data-bbox="786 1583 909 1638" style="float: left; margin-right: 10px;">CLICK </span> <b>Step 2 - Connect</b></p> <p><b>Facilitator:</b> <i>When you partner with families, you open opportunities for learning experiences that reflect families' hopes and dreams for their children.</i></p> <div data-bbox="646 1948 769 2003" style="float: left; margin-top: 20px;"> <p>CLICK </p> </div>

**STEP 2:**  
**CONNECT** *Continued*

**PRESENTATION SEQUENCE**



**FACILITATOR'S NOTES**

**Facilitator:** *Partnering with families helps:*

- **Teachers/providers** build strong relationships with families and develop ideas and resources.
- **Families** see themselves as powerful contributors to their child's learning.
- Provide meaningful, rich learning experiences for **children**.



**Facilitator:** *Everyone benefits from strong partnerships with families.*



**STEP 3:**  
**LEARN**

**PRESENTATION SEQUENCE**



**FACILITATOR'S NOTES**

[7 min]  **Step 3 - Learn**

**Facilitator:** *How do we partner with families?*



**STEP 3:**  
**LEARN** *Continued*

**PRESENTATION SEQUENCE**

**FACILITATOR'S NOTES**

To partner with families, relate to them as:

**Co-supporters:**  
Learn families' hopes and dreams

**Facilitator:** *To partner with families, relate to them as:*  
**Co-supporters**—Collaborate with families in supporting their children. Learn from families about their preferences, hopes, and dreams for their children.

**Example:** *With families with young dual language learners, you could discuss their preferences, "How would you like us to support your child's home language and English development?"*



To partner with families, relate to them as:

**Co-decision-makers:**  
Collaborate on learning goals

**Facilitator:** **Co-decision-makers**—Collaborate with families in making decisions about their child's learning goals and curriculum.

**Example:** *A teacher works with a child's family to decide on strategies to support a child in using language rather than grabbing or hitting to get what he wants.*



To partner with families, relate to them as:

**Co-teachers:**  
Offer opportunities to participate

**Facilitator:** **Co-teachers**—Offer families opportunities to actively participate in learning experiences. Let families choose how they want to be involved.

**Example:** *Kai's dad often tells stories to the children at morning drop-off, and Anastasia's mom leads an activity around a cultural object—her Russian nesting dolls.*



To partner with families, relate to them as:

**Co-decision-makers**

Reference handout.  
📄 **"Engaging Families in Donita's Classroom"**

**Facilitator:** *Let's practice. After I read a brief scenario, reflect with your partner on the discussion questions.*



**STEP 3:**  
**LEARN** *Continued*

**PRESENTATION SEQUENCE**

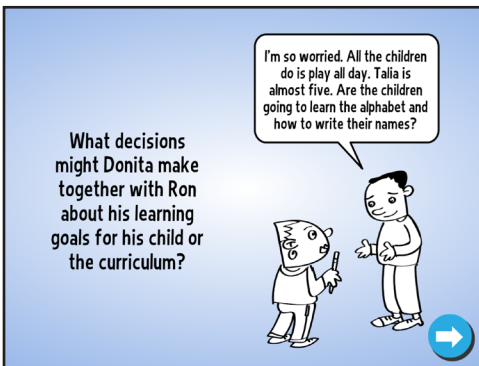
**FACILITATOR'S NOTES**



**Facilitator:** *A parent, Ron, says to his child's teacher, Donita, "I'm so worried. All the children do is play all day. Talia is almost five. Are the children going to learn the alphabet and how to write their names?"*

*Teachers/providers often respond to such a concern by sharing how literacy activities are embedded in children's play. Parents need to know this information, but let's think through how Donita can first partner with Ron.*

*Donita can engage Ron as a co-supporter by asking him what knowledge and skills he hopes Talia will learn while in preschool. She could then invite Ron to observe how the writing center, art area, and other interest areas support his learning goals for Talia.*

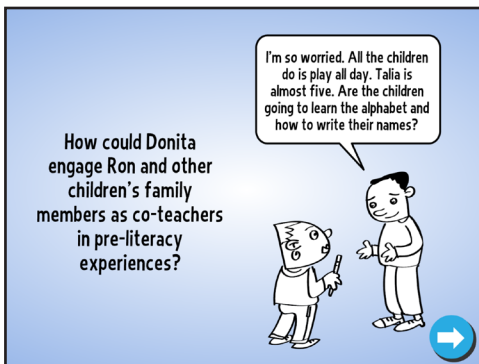


**Facilitator:** *What decisions might Donita make together with Ron about his learning goals for his child or the curriculum?*



Give the pairs time to discuss with each other. Ask for volunteers to share their ideas. Possible responses include:

- Decide on shared learning goals for Talia in the area of language and literacy
- Decide on some activities that Donita and Ron can use to support Talia's literacy skills





**Facilitator:** *How could Donita engage Ron and other children's family members as co-teachers in pre-literacy experiences?*





Give the pairs time to discuss with each other. Ask for volunteers to share their ideas.

**STEP 3:**  
**LEARN** *Continued*

PRESENTATION SEQUENCE	FACILITATOR'S NOTES
<div data-bbox="97 1024 574 1386" style="border: 1px solid red; padding: 10px;">  <p>When families and teachers/providers come together to discuss ideas and make decisions, programs can offer more personally meaningful learning experiences for children.</p>  <p style="text-align: right; font-size: small;">Go to step 4: EXPAND</p> </div>	<div data-bbox="730 336 795 399" style="float: left; margin-right: 10px;"> </div> <p>Possible responses include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Put a sign-in sheet for the children next to the parents' sign-in sheet where children can make a mark/ letter, or write their name</li> <li>■ Invite Ron or other family members to volunteer in the program. For example, when transforming the dramatic play area into a restaurant, children can write pretend menus, receipts, or money. Invite family members to support children in this pre-literacy activity.</li> <li>■ Send home pre-literacy activities for family members to extend children's learning at home. For example, ask families to identify things on a nature walk that start with the "S" sound, such as sun, spiders, and soil.</li> </ul> <div data-bbox="641 1113 771 1165" style="border: 1px solid gray; border-radius: 5px; padding: 2px; display: inline-block; margin-bottom: 10px;">             CLICK  </div> <p><b>Facilitator:</b> <i>When families and teachers/providers come together to discuss ideas and make decisions, programs can offer more personally meaningful learning experiences for children.</i></p>

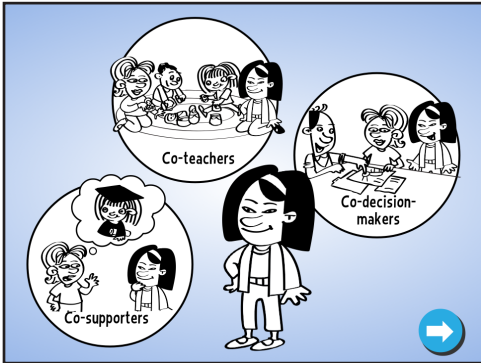
**STEP 4:**  
**EXPAND**

PRESENTATION SEQUENCE	FACILITATOR'S NOTES
<div data-bbox="97 1633 574 1990" style="border: 1px solid green; padding: 10px;"> <p>Step 4</p>  <p>Reflect on family engagement in your classroom or home.</p>  <div data-bbox="503 1932 552 1984" style="float: right; border: 1px solid blue; border-radius: 50%; width: 20px; height: 20px; text-align: center; line-height: 20px; color: white;">➔</div> </div>	<p>[2 min] <span style="border: 1px solid gray; border-radius: 5px; padding: 2px; display: inline-block; margin-right: 10px;">CLICK </span> <b>Step 4 - Expand</b></p> <p><b>Facilitator:</b> <i>Reflect on the family engagement in your classroom or home.</i></p> <div data-bbox="641 1942 771 1995" style="border: 1px solid gray; border-radius: 5px; padding: 2px; display: inline-block; margin-top: 20px;">             CLICK  </div>



**STEP 4:**  
**EXPAND** — *Continued*

**PRESENTATION SEQUENCE**



**FACILITATOR'S NOTES**

**Facilitator:** *Thinking back to the suggestions we gave Donita, choose one new way you could engage children's families as co-supporters, co-decision-makers, and co-teachers.*



Give participants time to individually reflect.

**Facilitator:** *What are **one or two** action steps you can take to engage families in the next week?*



Give participants time to individually reflect and write down their action steps. Ask for a few volunteers to share their ideas. Possible responses include:

- Use intake paperwork that includes information about families' preferences, hopes, and dreams for their child
- Schedule meetings with children's families to discuss learning goals
- Ask family members for input on learning activities at pick-up or drop-off
- Invite family members to lead activities based on their interests, skills, or careers that relate to the curriculum



**Facilitator:** *Equal partnerships help families feel invested in the program and give teachers/providers fresh ideas and support from families. Ultimately, effective family engagement results in rich learning opportunities for children.*





**Effective family engagement results in rich learning opportunities for children.**




## **THIS PD2GO PACK WAS INFORMED BY THE FOLLOWING RESOURCES:**

California Department of Education. (2014). *The California Early Childhood Educator Competencies: Family and Community Engagement*. Sacramento, CA: Author.

Halgunseth, L. C., Peterson, A., Stark, D. R., & Moodie, S. (2009). Family engagement, diverse families, and early childhood education programs: An integrated review of the literature. National Association for the Education of Young Children, The Pew Charitable Trusts.

Stephens, K. (2005). Meaningful family engagement: Just imagine the possibilities. *Exchange* (May/June). Redmond, WA: Child Care Exchange.

Summer, M. & Summer, G. L. (2014, September). Creating family learning communities. *Young Children*, 69(4), 8–14.

Virginia Department of Education. (2002). *Collaborative Family—School Relationships for Children's Learning: Beliefs and Practices*. Richmond: Author. Retrieved from [http://www.doe.virginia.gov/support/student\\_family/family-school\\_relationships/collaborative\\_family-school\\_relationships.pdf](http://www.doe.virginia.gov/support/student_family/family-school_relationships/collaborative_family-school_relationships.pdf)