

10 Tips for working with parent(s)/ carer(s)

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Common Ground

Start from the common ground of both yourself and them wanting what is in the 'best interests' of the child(dren). You both ultimately want the same thing, and it is about how you work together to achieve this.

Cultural Competence

Understanding a family's background; cultural/religious heritage is integral to building strong sustainable relationships with them. Do your own research, but also ask questions and be curious. Show them that you are taking an active interest in their lives.

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Acknowledgement

Acknowledge a parents expertise, and the challenges they may face and have faced in their lives. Take every experience they share with you on board and use it to plan your intervention for maximum impact

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Listen and Hear

It may be that the family you are working with have other issues they are trying to resolve. Listen to their concerns, and try to help wherever possible with any wider issues, to establish stronger rapport and engagement

Strengths Based Approach

It is common to focus your time looking at risk; of course - this is what we want to minimise! However, don't forget to look what strengths there are too, and work on building upon them so they become sustainable for when you close the case

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Empowerment

Encourage parents by giving them a voice; ask what *they* want to happen, ask what *their* understanding of why you are involved is - show them that you are listening

Multi Agency Working

If you are aware that the family have a good relationship with another professional, where appropriate, try to arrange a joint visit with them. They will be a great advocate for you, and you will also find establishing a relationship that little bit easier

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Whole Family Approach

Where you feel it is appropriate, allow parents to join in on direct work sessions with the child(ren). This will show them they are part of the process, and particularly when doing fun activities, will help strengthen your relationship with them

Integration

Invite parents along to events and conferences that you know of which would be appropriate for them to attend. This will provide them an opportunity to meet other parents and decrease social isolation

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