**Welcome to TX Child Care Tools.**

**Let's talk about family engagement.**

This overview will be covering

Administrative Resources,

Child Development,

Nutrition and Fitness Resources,

Safety and

Social and Emotional Resources.

Let's get started.

Family engagement is the cornerstone of building strong, trusting relationships with families and children. Communication is the key to establishing and maintaining those strong relationships, children's, social and emotional development benefits when their parents and teachers have good lines of communication. Let's explore resources on TX Child Care Tools that will support your family engagement efforts.

Here we are in TX Child Care Tools. We're looking at the “Engaging Families” section. This is all about building strong relationships. What a wealth of resources available to you here.

Let's start with the “Admin Tool” section. This is about your administrative operations to strengthen family engagement. There are a number of great tools here. We're going to concentrate on the enrollment section first,

Looking at the “Enrollment” resource page, the ‘Enrollment Agreement’ and the ‘Getting To Know You Questionnaire’ form a complete understanding of each child. The ‘Enrollment Agreement’ gathers all of the information you need to know about the child in their family. Plus, it forms a binding agreement between you and the family member. We'll look at this in greater detail in just a moment. Next, the ‘Getting to Know you Questionnaire.’ This is a supplemental tool to help you gain a personal understanding of the child before they're in your care. This is another great tool to help develop those personal relationships with families.

Let's look at that ‘Enrollment Agreement’ now. You'll notice that it starts with information and a recommendation that you have local law counsel review it. To be sure it's in line with local, state and federal requirements. Then there's instructions on ‘How To Prepare The Agreement For Distribution.’ Follow the instructions here for red content, yellow highlighted content and green content, and you'll be on your way to customizing your document. Scrolling down just a little bit and you'll find all of the details that are being captured here in the ‘Enrollment Agreement,’ all of the basic information. Plus, it starts to get into even more detailed information about who to release the child to, medical information and their medical history. All of this is vitally important to you as you're caring for this child. All of the sections in this document are completely editable. So be sure to go ahead and use it and edit it to reflect your own program's needs and practices.

Next, we'll be taking a look at the ‘Getting To Know You Guide.’ This is a really simple set of questions, but a vitally important set of questions to get to know that child more personally. And it will help ease the transition of that child into your care. You can see here very nice questions, highly detailed, but not super difficult for families to go through, and it just helps you really develop that intimate and trusting relationship with families.

Looking at the “Family Teacher Conference” resource page, you'll find planning tools to help you conduct a wonderful family teacher conference. Beginning with an invitation, a letter that is completely customizable to reflect your needs, and a set of guides for different age groups. This will allow you to conduct a Family Teacher Conference that's specific to the age of the child that you're discussing.

Let's take a look at one of those resources now. This is the ‘Infant Toddler Guide.’ The step-by-step approach allows you to plan for the conference, communicate with families, prepare for the conference, including some really helpful tips on what you might want to gather and things you might like to discuss. Then finally, what happens during the conference? First things first. You'll want to put that family member at ease. And here some great conversation starters to do so. Closing the conference, you'll want to maintain some documentation so that you know if there's any follow up and both you and the family member agree. All in all, a great set of tools to develop a strong, trusting relationship with families.

Looking at the “Family Survey” resource page feedback is truly your BFF. These resources will help put your best foot forward with families and building your family engagement. With the family survey cover letter to invite families to take your survey to a family survey. And finally, the ‘Family Survey Guide,’ which you really should read first and foremost, before you put together your survey. It tells you how and why to conduct that survey and most importantly, what to do after you receive the survey results. Let's take a look at that survey now.

You'll notice that there are yellow highlighted areas in which you can click to change any of that information like we're doing now. You can change anything in this survey that makes sense for your program’s needs and wants. You'll notice it's organized with topics such as communication, teacher, parent/teacher conferences, facilities, operations and food, family relations and overall satisfaction. A great way to gather insight from your families.

Moving on to another form of two way communication – “Newsletters.” These are predesigned resources to help you communicate with families about the happenings in each of your classrooms. These are predesigned in Microsoft Word. You can see that we have a template available for you, along with seasonal templates already built for you. There's some basic information that's always included, such as a little poem. And a song, and it's a great set of reminders to help families understand what's coming up, things that might be needed for their children or just to keep them abreast of what is happening in their child's day-to-day world in your child care program.

Looking at additional family handouts and tools available to you in the “Engaging Families” section of child care tools, you'll find resources, including “Child Development,” “Environment,” “Nutrition and Fitness,” “Safety” and “Social and Emotional.” These are a handy set of resources. When families ask, what do I do now? And often your child's teacher is the first line of defense to help families navigate the difficulties of parenting.

Looking at the resources available to you on “Child Development,” you'll see that there are a number of great tools. Families can be exasperated when they experience typical childhood developmental concerns. These resources can help when they ask you for guidance. We're going to look at three sections today. The section on “Biting,” “Developmental Milestones” and “Sleeping and Napping.”

Jumping right into the “Biting” page. This is a great tool from the Centers on Social and Emotional Foundations for Early Learning. And what we love about this tool is that it gives practical guidance and tips for what to do in the moment a child bites. That can be so helpful to a frustrated parent when they're just trying to figure out what do I do next? Here you see those ‘what to do in the moment a child bites’ right in this column on the right in purple.

Next, looking at the “Developmental Milestones” that come from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. These are a group of age appropriate milestones that help families understand…is their child developing correctly? And as you can see, it's all by age. We're going to only look at one tool and that is the end of year one. Let's click on that.

Here's that tool. You can see that it's organized with what most children do at this age and it's organized by domain. And more importantly, if a family is concerned, they can act early by talking to their child's doctor, moving down. You'll see that this resource is also available in Spanish.

Moving to the “Sleeping and Napping” section. Positive sleep practices is job one for families and helping making life easier is what we want to do. Bedtime and naptime are so critically important to children's behavior, their overall mood and also their overall wellness. This resource provides tips for bedtime and naptime routines to make life easier. Great tool.

The “Nutrition and Fitness” resource area provides a number of resources to help extend your healthy habits and your nutrition and fitness classroom learning and extend that with families to help them embrace a routine that includes healthy habits.

Promoting physical activity is a natural part of this. Kids are active people. For children, exercise means running, jumping, climbing and playing. And kids who are physically active often sleep better, too. Let's explore more.

Let's look at TX Child Care Tools to find the resources to help families incorporate healthy habits in their homes.

Looking at the “Physical Activity” resource section, you'll see two great handouts for families. We're going to take a look at ‘Kids and Exercise.’ This tool comes from Kid’s Health, Nemours. It provides wonderful information and it's available in Spanish. Simply print it out as a handout. It describes the many benefits of exercise, the elements of physical fitness, including building endurance and strength and flexibility. And then it goes on to describe these elements a little later in the document. And then finally, these tips for raising Fit Kids.

Let's talk about childhood obesity. Childhood obesity is a serious problem in the US and puts children at risk for poor health. We're going to explore some resources that will help raise awareness, seek opportunities for prevention and support parents in their quest for healthy habits, for their children and for their families.

There are a number of tips and resources available in TX Child Care Tools. We're only going to look at two. both of these come from My Plate. The first is ‘Snack Tips for Families’ provides tips for families to help choose healthy options for snacks, 10 ideas and tips to help them get started.

The next is How To Cut Back On Your Kid's Sweet Treats. There are 10 tips and suggestions for choosing healthier alternatives.

The next area that's near and dear to every family's heart is TV and Limiting Screen Time. Interactive video games or use of tablets and other electronics can be excellent sources of education and entertainment. But too much screen time can have unhealthy effects on children. It can encourage the wrong behaviors, such as making less healthy choices at meal time, or it can affect social and emotional development and behaviors. It can even make eating sweets or sugary cereals exciting, all sending the wrong messages to kids.

TX Child Care Tools has a number of tip sheets from We Can Resources designed to help reduce time in front of a screen and provides areas for families to set goals for activities, acceptable screen time, making mealtime, family time and it calls out the link between TV and food choices. This is a handy resource to share with families.

The next resource is also from We Can Resources. This is a helpful chart that families can use to track screen hours and to limit their child's screen exposure. The chart can be filled out on a daily basis. And it can be printed and hung on the refrigerator or other conspicuous place as a helpful reminder to limit screen time, making this another helpful tool for families.

Moving into the “Safety” resource area.

Keeping children safe is job one for both teachers and families. These resources will help raise awareness with families for all kinds of dangers, many of which are preventable.

Looking at the TX Child Care Tools website, we're looking at ‘Keeping Children Safe.’ We're going to click on “Car and Bus Safety.”

You can easily print out the resource and either post it to your bulletin board or use it as a handout. It has great information about keeping children safe around school buses.

Another important topic to share with families is “Fire Safety.” TX Child Care Tools has a number of resources available to help keep families safe. Looking at the resources here, you'll notice there is ‘Fire Prevention Tips for Little Kids,’ an age-appropriate resource that can be used with young children.

‘Fire Safety Checklists” for parents. Great to have a plan in place before you need it.

And finally, this resource from Sesame Street, ‘Fire Safety Program,’ a wonderful family guide that can be used to help create your plan and practices for fire safety at home.

Next, the “Medication Safety” resource section on TX Child Care Tools provides guidance and resources, including a poster and tipsheet. And it provides helpful information on medication, including dietary supplements and vitamins, which is so vitally important to keep out of reach, and out of sight, and up and away from the reach of children. The resources that you can easily print out and share with families include, ‘Talk about Medication Safety,’ an Infographic on ‘What To Know About Storing Medicines,’ and finally, a poster and tipsheet titled ‘Up and Away.’

The resources available in the “Safe Sleep Environment” section will help families keep their baby safe while in a crib. It talks about crib safety and back to sleep and tummy to play sudden infant death syndrome and tip sheets, handouts, posters, videos and more. There are a number of tools available to you in this section. I hope you'll take the time to read through them and to share these helpful tools with families.

In the “Social and Emotional” section, you'll find a variety of tools available to help families understand and manage their children's feelings and emotions. These resources are ready made to help families develop positive parenting skills so they can better work through these confusing and challenging times with their young children. We're going to explore three topics.

First, let's look at “Cooperation.” What I love about this handout is it explains a step-by-step manner. How do you teach your child simple chores and what to do when your child refuses? It's easy for families to read and quickly implement strategies to address cooperation challenges.

Next, the “Discipline” resources. One of the most difficult parenting skills is discipline. This resource gives practical guidance on how to discipline without the use of corporal punishment.

And finally, “Emotions.” Children often feel and express emotions deeply and passionately. This article gives examples of typical situations and solutions for how to respond, to help the child use their words and express their emotions in an appropriate way.

Let's put it all together.

We've explored a number of resources to help families by building a respectful and trusting relationship with them. The resources on TX Child Care Tools are designed to extend your family engagement practices as you continue to put families and children first and foremost in your work.

As always, TX Child Care Tools is ready to support your efforts with knowledge and guidance to help you manage both the interpersonal relationships of working with families as well as your administrative practices related to family engagement.

TX Child Care Tools, the essential source for your family engagement needs.

What can TX Child Care Tools do for you today?