

## Tip Sheet: Talking with Families About Their Child's Behavior and Referral to SUCCESS

Families are important partners when you have concerns about a child's behavior and are considering a referral to SUCCESS. Consider the following tips to guide conversations and collaborative decisions with families about a referral to SUCCESS.

### Establish Regular Communication and Positive Relationships with Families

- Start building relationships with families early. Conversations about a child's behavior will be most effective when you have already established a positive relationship with the family.
- Communicate positive information to families about their child's health, behavior, learning, and play. Families will be most likely to listen to your concerns about their child when they feel that you understand both their child's strengths and challenges.

### Engage Families in a Conversation about Concerns

Talking with a family about your concerns about their child's behavior will be most successful when it is a collaborative discussion in which both you and the family share your perspectives. Give the family time to think, and encourage the family to respond and share their thoughts.

- 1. Describe the behaviors you see:** Give the family details about specific behavior(s) that you and the child's teachers have observed that concern you. Describe how often it happens, when the behavior tends to occur, and how the Center has tried to respond to this behavior. Avoid labels and suggesting diagnoses to families.
- 2. Ask what the family sees at home:** Ask the family if they have observed similar behaviors at home. How often does it happen? When does it happen? How has the family tried to respond? What do they think about this behavior? Do they have other concerns?
- 3. Communicate that your goal is to support healthy development:** Keep the focus on supporting the child's healthy development, positive adjustment to the classroom, and readiness to start school. Communicate that you want to work together to do what is best for the child.

### Collaboratively Discuss a Referral to SUCCESS

If you and the family determine that accessing additional resources and supports for the child will be beneficial, there are a variety of options you might consider. SUCCESS may be a good fit for the child, your Center, and the family. Consider the following points when discussing a referral to SUCCESS.

- 1. Review the brochure together:** Discuss the overarching goals of SUCCESS and the types of services offered. It is important to highlight that SUCCESS services begin with a brief consultation (e.g., classroom observation, standardized questionnaires, and conversations with program staff and families) which leads to the provision of feedback and recommendations. Follow-up supports are also available to families and Centers to integrate assessment recommendations.
- 2. Review the Family Agreement Form:** Give the family a copy of the form to read and sign if they agree to their child's participation. Explain that by signing the form, the family gives permission for their child to participate in SUCCESS services and for the Center to provide information about their child to SUCCESS.
- 3. Make a plan for next steps:** If the family agrees to participate in SUCCESS, let them know what the next steps will be.
  - Center will contact SUCCESS to provide information and submit the referral paperwork.
  - SUCCESS consultation will be scheduled.
  - Families are a very important part of the assessment and feedback process!