



WORKING COLLABORATIVELY TO ENGAGE FAMILIES AND SCHOOL/COMMUNITY PARTNERS IN SAP PROCESS

Module for Standard 3
K-12 SAP
Bridge Training



Competencies

- Understand consent requirements for parents/caregivers in the SAP process (3.a.2)
- Examine strategies for engaging parents/caregivers in the SAP process (3.a.4)
- Explore strategies for effectively communicating with parents, especially in crisis or transitional situations (3.c.2)
- Understand the dynamics of the needs and concerns of parents, caregivers as it applies to the SAP process (3.c.3)

Parent Involvement in the K-12 SAP Process

- It is the parent's right to be involved with the SAP process and to have full access to all school records under the applicable state and federal laws and regulations.
- Involvement of parents in all four phases of the SAP program highlights the parents' role and responsibility in the decision-making process affecting their children's education and is key to the successful resolution of problems.

When Must Parent/Guardian Notification Occur?


- Schools must obtain written consent from parents/caregivers prior to interviewing a child.
- Best practice is for SAP teams to contact the parent as soon as the team receives the referral. This allows the team to involve the parent at the earliest stage, partnering fully with parents/caregivers in the process.

Commonwealth of Pennsylvania's Student Assistance Program Frequently Asked Questions and Best Practice Responses, June 2011



Remember Written Parent/Guardian Permission Should be Obtained for the Following Three Areas of the SAP Process:

- The initial onset of the SAP process.
- When the SAP team suggests a MH and/or D&A screening/assessment.
- If any in-school supports, such as an educational support group, are recommended.

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- A Sample of a Parent Consent Form and a Screening Consent Form can be found under the SAP Team Member's Tab at www.sap.state.pa.us

The Importance of Written Parental Consent

- Written consent from parent or legal guardian is required for a student to participate in SAP.
- The Protection of Pupil Rights Act (PPRA) - requires written parental permission when interviewing students regarding “...mental or psychological problems of the student of the student’s family; sex behavior or attitudes; illegal, anti-social, self-incriminating, or demeaning behavior...”

The Importance of Written Parental Consent - Who should sign?

Refer to district policy when determining parental signature for SAP. Consider the following:

- If married and living in the same home, only one parent needs to sign the form.
- If divorced/separated and there is a written custody agreement, request a copy and follow the agreement.
- If the agreement gives both parents the authority to make educational decisions, either may sign.
- If one parent has legal custody, then he or she is the only one that can sign for permission for SAP services.

What happens if a parent chooses not to access the SAP Program?

- Make a written record of the refusal.
- Check back with the referral source within 30 days.
- Contact the parent/caregiver again to establish good communication and update and share information.
- Keep lines of communication open with the parent and maintain a log of all calls/actions.

Remember...

- SAP teams may use in-school supports to help the child provided parents rights under PPRA are observed.
- Implement district crisis response plan immediately, if a student is in danger of self-harm or others.

When Building a Connection with Parents through the SAP Process

Remember the Stages of Change

- Pre-contemplation - Parent(s) may not be ready to “buy in” to SAP.
 - Validate their lack of readiness.
 - Emphasize the decision to change belongs to them.
 - Educate them about the consequences of avoiding change.
- Contemplation- Parent(s) aware of the benefits of participation with SAP but remain aware of their concerns.
 - Continue to validate their ambivalence and identify possible positive outcomes

When Building a Connection with Parents in the SAP Process Remember the Stages of Change (Cont.)

- Preparation- Parents are willing to take steps toward change.
 - Assist them with the identification of the issue and with problem solving.
 - Assist them with overcoming obstacles.
- Action- They are in agreement with making the necessary change/accepting SAP support.
 - Continue to support them and provide feedback.
 - Keep lines of communication open with them.
- Maintenance- Parents are following through with recommendations.
 - Follow-up with them and continue to support them.

Tips for Partnering with Parents During Crisis and Transitional Times

- Be flexible, reliable, and consistent.
- Anticipate anxiety.
- Interpret unfamiliar language and check for understanding.
- Be factual, supportive, and non-judgmental.
- Help clarify and articulate questions and expectations.

Tips for Partnering with Parents During Crisis and Transitional Times (Cont.)

- Parents/caregivers may not fully comprehend information during highly emotional times.
 - Provide follow-up to enhance understanding.
 - Provide extra support as families adjust to new settings, programs, and process.

Motivational Interviewing Tips For Building Successful Partnerships with Parents

- Ask Open-ended Questions- (“Tell me about your child’s strengths?”)
- Use Reflective Listening-*paraphrase the parent/caregivers statements.* (“It sounds like you’re saying you have noticed some changes in your son’s behavior at home.”)

Motivational Interviewing Tips For Building Successful Partnerships with Parents (Cont.)

- Reframe Statements- *place different meaning on what the person says* (“You may be right that your child’s behavior is typical for someone his/her age but his/her recent behavior is having an impact on her academically. Do you have any concerns about that?”)
- Affirm- *supportive statements that enhance relationships* (“It sounds like you have a good idea about what might be going on with your son/daughter. Would you like to work together to help him/her to be more successful here at school?”)

Motivational Interviewing Overview and Tips by Sobell & Sobell , 2003

Tips for Building Successful Partnerships with Parents

- **Remember:** As a parent, at what point would you expect to be brought into the SAP process and how much information would you want to receive from the school regarding your child?

Tips for Building Successful Partnerships with Parents (Cont.)

- Reach out to parents as equal partners, build ties between parents and the school.
 - Parents have a right to know information the school has on their child.
- View parents as partners.
 - There is no need to get student permission in order to talk to parents.
- Don't promise blanket confidentiality to the student.

Tips for Building Successful Partnerships with Parents (Cont.)

- Help parents develop a plan, techniques, and strategies by collaborating throughout the SAP process.
- Keep a strengths-based focus. What are the student's strengths and how can those strengths be used to help the student achieve success?
- Make appropriate adaptations as necessary throughout the process.