

Five Resources for Family Engagement: Engaging English Learner Families

Engaging families to support student learning is an important role for 21st Century Community Learning Centers (21st CCLC). With many English Learner families, programs need to be able to understand their needs and also how to help them support their students' academic and social development. These five free resources will provide you with tools to engage English Learner families.

1. **A Guide for Engaging ELL Families: Twenty Strategies for School Leaders** This is a guide that offers concrete actions and the theory behind the actions. Written for Colorin Colorado by Lydia Breiseth with Kristina Robertson and Susan Lafond. August, 2011. <http://www.colorincolorado.org/pdfs/guides/Engaging-ELL-Families.pdf>
2. **Language Matters - Supporting English Language Learners in After School and Youth Programs** This is an excerpt from a book *Our Roots, Our Future* and is a very quick reference point and foundational concepts to know if you are working with ELL youth in programs. It also discusses the importance of community, parents and after school programs and schools to join one another to support both English and home language skills. http://www.afterschoolnetwork.org/sites/main/files/file-attachments/language_matters.pdf
3. **Increasing ELL Parental Involvement in Our Schools: Learning From the Parents** This is a succinct article telling the story of two immigrant families and using their stories to share examples of ways to engage parents as advocates for school success in the home, especially around literacy. On page 111, the suggestions provided are excellent and can work for afterschool programs with many cultures and languages. <http://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/00405841003626551>
4. **Using Blogs to Engage English-Language Learners** A fourth grade teacher shares his experience with using blogs to help take his reluctant ELL student writers to a place where blogs become the virtual workbench and center of learning activity. He also shares his parent engagement in this process and the exciting outcomes yielded through the process. <http://www.edutopia.org/blog/ell-digital-divide-jon-schwartz>
5. **The Essential Guide to Apps for Learning English as a Second Language** Mobile digital devices like smartphones, tablets, and even laptops have made it much easier for learners of English to immerse themselves in constant practice and speed up their learning process. These suggestions concentrate efforts in:
 - Vocabulary building
 - Reading comprehension
 - Pronunciation, and more <http://mastersinesl.com/essential-esl-app-guide/>