



Lanark County
Planning Council
For Children,
Youth and Families

REGIONAL
PARENT ENGAGEMENT
PROJECT UPDATE
2013/2014



Introduction

- *“By adopting a shared language across a system, professionals across all sectors and organizations will be able to work together effectively to plan and organize services....”*

Ministry of Children and Youth Services (2011).
Defining Integration: A Best Start Working Paper.
MYCS: Toronto.

What we set out to do

- Develop a commonly understood and accepted definition of parent engagement
- Develop a regional parent engagement strategy with required local variations
- Identify shared training resources

Action Research Process

- Symposia were held on January 14th and 15th to identify critical components of a shared understanding and common definition of parent engagement in South East Ontario

Lanark/Leeds-Grenville SYMPOSIUM



Action Research Process

- A small group of symposium participants met on January 28th to review and discuss themes generated at each symposium and work on a definition

Common Ideas

Respectful

Strength-based

**Mindful of the
expertise of
families**

Inclusive

Accessible

Collaborative

**Based on clear
communication**

**An opportunity
to learn**

On a continuum

**Constantly
changing**

Cross-sectoral

**Different from
Youth
Engagement**

Network Liaisons

- All four tables have parent engagement committees
- Between February 13th and 26th, the draft outline and common idea statements were to be reviewed by the committees
- A common date could not be found in Lanark, so the draft was reviewed by the Stewardship committee (with agreement from the Parent Engagement Committee)

Decisions

- “Parent Engagement” thought to be limiting, has been replaced by “Family Engagement”
- A regional definition of “family” has been created
- “Shared understanding/common definition” has been replaced by “common ideas of Family Engagement” which is more of a working definition that can be adapted by each planning table to suit their needs in developing community specific “Family Engagement” plans.

Family Engagement

For the purpose of this document, and as used by the four planning tables, “family” is understood to include significant others, or anyone a person views as important because of a strong, meaningful or enduring emotional, physical or biological connection. Basically, “family defines family”.

Next Steps

- The final report will be available electronically at the end of March 2014, and approval will be sought for submission to MCYS
- The final report will be made available, and will be presented and distributed at the May LCPC meeting
- How many paper copies of the report do we require?

Considerations for our Community-Specific Family Engagement Plan

- What is the most effective way for the LCPC members, as a community planning table, to gather information from families?
- Should the LCPC directly engage families?
- Should the LCPC support member organizations in Family Engagement through training and resources?