



Parent Leadership Ambassador Training

Facilitator Guide

This publication was produced by Circle of Parents, a national resource partner of the FRIENDS National Resource Center for Community-Based Child Abuse Prevention (CBCAP). FRIENDS is a service of the Children's Bureau and a member of the T/TA network. FRIENDS is funded by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children, Youth and Families, Office of Child Abuse and Neglect, under discretionary Grant 90CZ0023. The contents of this publication do not necessarily reflect the views or policies of the funder, nor does mention of trade names, commercial products or organizations imply endorsement by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. This information is in the public domain. Readers are encouraged to copy portions of the text which are not the property of copyright holders and share them, but please credit the FRIENDS National Resource Center for CBCAP.



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Housekeeping Items/Training Overview

TIME:

Section Purpose:

Review agenda and housekeeping items

Provide participants with an overview of the training

- Welcome participants and thank them for coming
- Identify housekeeping items with them including:
 - Location of bathrooms
 - Refreshments/water locations
 - Start time, end time and breaks in training

Training Material Overview:

- There are two manuals for the training session:
 - **The facilitator's guide:**
 - Each section includes;
 - Title of the Section at the top of the page
 - Approximate time to complete the section right top corner
 - Purpose or main point of the section
 - Key training point on the page that include three key sections:
 - Tell/Inform heading is used to let the trainer know key points that need to be made. This can be delivered however the trainer would like.

- Training preparation/special instructions on the side margin, with extra room to make your own notes when needed.
- **The participant guide:**
 - A copy of the corresponding power point at the top of the page with supplemental training information below it.
 - All pages in the participant guide and the trainer's guide are the same to keep it easy to follow.

There is no need to have a hard copy of the power point since all slides are in the participant's guide with the corresponding materials.

A CD of the power point is included in your training manual. If you need further information you can contact:

Circle of Parents
2100 South Marshall
Unit 305
Chicago, Il 60623
Phone: 773-257-0111 Ext. 137

Agenda

TIME: 5 minutes

Section Purpose:

- ◆ To provide the roadmap for our journey for the next day.

INFORM:

The analogy for this training is that of a journey. Working together is a journey. Making a positive difference isn't a one-time thing, but a process like going on a trip. There has to be preparation and follow through to really make change.

Have audio clip "Dawn and Cyndi" ready to play.

The agenda is made up of 6 pieces, with descriptions of the sections found on page 6.

Review agenda in Participant Guide, page 6.

ACTIVITY

If possible, play the audio clip from NPR Story Corp titled, Dawn and Cyndi. This clip is about 1-2 minutes. It is a parent talking about why it's been important to be a part of parent leadership.

**** TRAINER'S NOTE:** There are 6 NPR clips to choose from on the training CD, please feel free to familiarize yourself with all clips and use the one that is most appropriate for your training audience.

Ground Rules of Training

TIME: 5 minutes

Section Purpose:

Provide trainer and participants with and opportunity to discuss the ground rules of training for the next two days.

To Do:

Prepare flipchart ahead of time with ground rules on them to hang and reference in room.

INFORM:

There are some ground rules to share with group to ensure training goes as smoothly as possible.

- Start on time/end on time
- Be respectful of each other
- We all have differing opinions-agree to disagree
- Be professional
- Everyone participate-everyone in the room brings special perspectives that we can all learn from
- Realize we all learn from one another
- Parking lot—a flip chart page or area of whiteboard labeled as such. Used when:
 - There are questions that you don't have the answer too or further clarification needs to happen;
 - When a topic arises that is slightly off topic or needs further discussion and there is no time to cover it, OR the discussion is taking up more time than planned it can be placed on the "parking lot"
- Turn cell phones on vibrate
- HAVE FUN!!

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Introduction Activity

Who Are We Traveling With?

TIME: 45 minutes

Section Purpose:

Provide participants with and opportunity to get to know one another

Share their goals/feelings about Parent Leadership

Identify their expectations of training

ACTIVITY

** Trainer can use this exercise or another get-acquainted exercise*

- Have participants break into groups of two.
- Use handout "Introduction Worksheet" as a guide for their discussion with their partner.
- Tell participants they will be given 10 minutes, 5 minutes per person to discuss the information from the introduction worksheet.
- After 10 minutes large group will reconvene and each member will introduce their partner to the group addressing the information on the introduction page.
- As participants share the information regarding question 3, write these on a flipchart as the expectations of training. The trainer keeps these up throughout the training to revisit to ensure that expectations are being met.

Why Do We Need Parent Involvement?

TIME: 10 minutes

Section Purpose:

Participants the opportunity to discuss benefits of parent involvement for the parent, child, agency and community.

ACTIVITY

- Ask participants to jot down quickly 2-4 benefits that occur for parents when they are involved with agencies.
- Ask participants to jot down quickly 2-4 benefits that occur for organizations when they are involved with parents.

TELL/INFORM

- Research has been completed that shows parents who are involved in services that are provided to their children have stronger families and better organizations. An example of this: children are more successful in school regarding their behavior and their grades.
- Children and family advocates felt so strongly about this, they supported a federal law to make states include parents when possible.

- Being involved fosters commitment not compliance. People want to help make programs successful when they feel invested or ownership.
- Children learn best when their parents are able to play four key roles in their children's learning: teachers (helping their children at home), supporters (contributing to their skills at school), advocates (helping children receive fair treatment), and decision makers (participating in joint problem-solving at every level).
- Because of research and information about stronger families and better agencies, legislators passed a law to provide money to states that include parents.

The law: is called **CBCAP Legislation- CAPTA Title II Section 202** Eligibility states:

"Such lead entity is an existing public, quasi-public, or nonprofit private entity (which may be an entity that has not been established pursuant to State legislation, executive order, or any other written authority of the State) with a demonstrated ability to work with other State and community-based agencies to provide training and technical assistance, and that has the capacity and commitment to ensure the meaningful involvement of parents who are consumers and who can provide leadership in the planning, implementation, and evaluation of programs and policy decisions of the applicant agency in accomplishing the desired outcomes for such efforts."

CBCAP: Community Based Child Abuse Prevention

TIME: 5 minutes

Section Purpose:

Provide a brief understanding about the funding and the push for efforts of parents and practitioners' to work together.

TELL/INFORM

This is a brief overview of CBCAP, what it stands for and how it came to be.

CBCAP- Community Based Child Abuse Prevention

CBCAP stands for Community-Based Child Abuse Prevention. It refers to specific types of child abuse prevention programs that exist in every state in the U.S.

The federal government provides money each year for states to promote community-based approaches to strengthen families and communities.

The government has legislated each state to provide services that promote the following:

- Comprehensive support for parents
- Promote the development of parenting skills
- Improve family access to formal and informal resources
- Support needs of parents with disabilities through respite or other activities
- Provide referrals for early health and development services
- Promote meaningful parent leadership

The Connection with CBCAP

TIME: 5 minutes

Section Purpose:

The information below is to provide you as the trainer additional information about CBCAP. The key is for participants to understand the connection between CBCAP and Circle of Parents.

TELL/INFORM

CBCAP is the "umbrella" of funding that supports child abuse prevention activities and many other services across the country.

Some services that might be covered in the CBCAP money include services/programs that promote:

- Comprehensive support for parents
- Development of parenting skills
- Improvement of family access to formal and informal resources
- Support needs of parents with disabilities through respite or other activities
- Opportunities for referrals of early health and development services
- Meaningful parent leadership

Circle of Parents is connected by the last category...

Meaningful parent involvement

Circle of Parents, FRIENDS and PLAT

TIME: 5 minutes

Section Purpose:

Provide a brief overview of Circle of Parents and its role in supporting parents and practitioners to work together.

EXTRA INFO FOR TRAINER

More detailed information can be found at:

<http://www.friendsnrc.org/aboutus/partners/cop.htm>

TELL/INFORM

- Circle of Parents ® is a national network of national parent leaders and statewide and metropolitan regional non-profit organizations dedicated to using a peer-to-peer, self-help model of parent support as one of the means of preventing child abuse and neglect and strengthening families.
- The current FRIENDS project, Circle of Parents, has been in existence since 2004.
- FRIENDS is committed to providing training and technical assistance to CBCAP agencies, led by the state that help with their:
 - Understanding of the value, benefits, challenges and behaviors associated with including parent leaders in family support and child abuse prevention program and policy development.

- Ability to build capacity within their respective states to engage parents as participants and leaders in the design, implementation and evaluation of program initiatives aimed at the prevention of child abuse and neglect;
- Influence on the inclusion of parent leaders in the Program Improvement Plans of the Child and Family Services Reviews (CFSR) and the Child and Family Services Plan (CFSP) processes; and
- Competence to contribute to the creation of a useful tool kit on parent leadership development for statewide and community-based child abuse prevention programs.
- Circle of Parents will contribute the assets of its Parents as Leaders and Training and Technical Assistance Committees to the FRIENDS National Resource Center for CBCAP. Circle of Parents facilitates the work of the FRIENDS Parent Advisory Council (PAC), develops and disseminates materials, publishes a quarterly newsletter, prepares and coordinates trainers, and provides technical assistance calls and on-site technical assistance visits. For all these activities, Circle of Parents draws upon the expertise of the FRIENDS PAC, PLAT Trainers and its Training and Technical Assistance Committee.
- PLAT (Parent Leadership Ambassador Training) was created to assist in providing parents and providers with knowledge/skills/tools that strengthen parents in leadership roles and make partnerships between parents and practitioners more successful.

Language Clarification

TIME: 10 minutes

Section Purpose:

Make sure everyone is on the same page with some of the common language we will be using.

Parent:

When we talk about parents, we're referring to anyone in a parenting role - not just a biological parent.

For our purposes, we are particularly interested in parents who have personal experience in using resources & services to strengthen their family

It is important to engage parents who speak and act from their perspective as a parent, as opposed to coming from the perspective of a staff member for an organization or institution

Practitioner:

We'll be using the word ***practitioner*** to describe - A staff member, employed by an agency, WHO IS INVOLVED IN PROVIDING SERVICES FOR PARENTS, CHILDREN OR FAMILIES

Oftentimes, we may use the term professional to describe this role, but practitioner is more appropriate for a few reasons...

- First - Many parents have professional roles in addition to parenting - it's a big oversight not to recognize that
- In addition - Parenting itself requires some professional expertise!

•But most importantly - The word practitioner contains the word "practice" indicating that we don't have it all figured out.

One of the most important reasons we need to clarify and understand the definition of parent and practitioner is to hold agencies and programs accountable. It is not enough that practitioners are also parents. Agencies and programs need to provide meaningful leadership opportunities for consumer parents they work with and serve.

Our work is a work in progress.

Parent Leadership: is a term that we use interchangeably with:

- Collaborative leadership
- Parent engagement
- Parent involvement

But what do we mean when we talk about parent leadership?

Parent leaders are people who are:

- Committed** to making positive changes in their family and community
- Representing** a "parent voice" as opposed to functioning in a staff role - providing a different perspective.

In addition, parent leaders:

- Advocate** for their children and for other parents - helping them see their strengths and encouraging them to make use of them

By doing these things, parent leaders become role models to their children and to other parents.

But becoming a parent leader doesn't happen overnight. Everyone needs support, encouragement, and skills to take on leadership responsibilities. Sometimes, we just need others to help us notice and build on the skills we already have.

Essentially, you just need to look around this room to see what parent leadership looks like. We have parent leaders here who have a commitment to enriching their family and community; otherwise you wouldn't be here today.

Leadership: Where do you stand?

TIME: 20 minutes

Section Purpose:

To define leadership and have participants think/discuss their views on leadership and whether leaders are born or made.

Prior to the training: place a line of masking tape from one side of the room to another. (If you are unable to do this, you can put 2 signs, one on each side of the room. One that says AGREE, one that says DISAGREE.

In this session we will define a leader as: a person who has commanding authority or influence.

ACTIVITY

Have participants stand up and go to the part of the training room that has room to move around.

Explain to the group that you are going to make a few statements. If the participants agree with the statement you make, they will move to the agree side of the room or line. Likewise, for disagree.

Statements: (Read the statements that are in **bold**. Debrief the activity with questions in *italics*.)

- **Leaders are born, not made.**
 - *What makes you choose your answer?*
- **Anybody can be a leader if they try hard enough.**
 - *What makes you choose your answer?*
- **With the right training and studying, almost anyone can become a leader.**

The Parent Leadership Ladder

TIME: 35 minutes

Section Purpose:

To define leadership and have participants think/discuss the ways that agencies encourage parent leaders in all parents.

ACTIVITY:

Divide participants into smaller groups for discussion. Propose each of the following questions, giving groups 5 minutes for discussion of each question in their group.

- What does parent leadership feel like for parents?
- What does parent leadership feel like for agencies?

After the group has discussed each question, bring the larger group back together and ask groups to share their thoughts on the questions. Make notes on large flipchart paper. Use the points that are brought by each group as you begin to discuss the parent leadership ladder.

Point out the parent leadership ladder beginning on page 104 in the Resource Section of the Participant's Manual. Discuss the parent leadership ladder and how each level of the ladder engages all parents, even those who are just beginning in leadership roles.

ACTIVITY

Have audio clip Eliza and Cyndi ready to play.

Play the audio clip Eliza and Cyndi. Eliza is a parent leader and talks about her progression in leadership. Where do you think she is in her journey? At what leadership level did she begin her journey? What were her obstacles? Support? Do you think she is committed to the process? What might keep her going?

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Where are we now?



Where am I now?

My Journey

TIME: 20 minutes

Section Purpose:

Provide participants the opportunity to reflect on their time involved with Parent Leadership up to this point

Summarize their experience

ACTIVITY

Refer to the “**My Journey**” handout.

Divide the participants into two groups.

A trainer should be assigned to each group. A question to jump-start the conversation:

Where are you in your parent engagement journey?

Ask participants to reflect on their experiences working with parent leadership.

Participants should choose which title best represents his/her journey and think about why he/she has chosen that road.

Ask participants to share their title and reasons for choosing it (round-robin style).

If time permits representative from each group will report back to the larger group, giving a brief summary of the responses.

OPTIONAL:

Have participants answer each question on the My Journey Worksheet individually. After everyone has jotted down their answers, discuss briefly with small groups.

Have the small groups come up with a collective title that best describes their experience. Their choice may or may not match the given choices.

Benefits of Parent Involvement

TIME:15 minutes

Section Purpose:

To assist participants to understand why parent involvement is important.

To identify the benefits to both parents and organizations.

Participants will learn the principles and practices that lead to successful and authentic parent leadership: family support principles, Collaborative leadership and strength-based practice.

DISCUSSION

Ask participants why they think parent involvement is important. If not mentioned, supplement the conversation with the following:

- *It's the law: CBCAP legislation.*

Research supports parent involvement as a way to create stronger families and more effective organizations.

Refer participants to Resource Section to review:

- "Benefits of Parent Involvement" for additional reference material.
- The research summaries
- Web links to resources

ACTIVITY

Divide participants into 3 or 4 small groups and ask them to brainstorm the benefits of parent involvement—for the parents and then for the organization.

Ask one member of the group to document the group's ideas and report them back to the large group.

After each group has reported back, de-brief by referring participants to the Benefits of Parent Involvement.

The key points here are that there are definite benefits for families and organizations.

Benefits for Parents include those listed in Benefits of Parent Involvement handout: (make sure during the discussion that the key issues were mentioned):

Improved services for the family...who better knows what is needed than the parents and families.

Parents feel better because they are making a difference. (Most all people want to make a positive difference in their community)

Organizations are more accountable

Parent can learn knowledge and skills to help with future challenges.

Children see their parents making a change and it builds confidence that change can happen.

Tools needed:

Enough sticky notes for group to have 5-7 pieces.

**An alternative to this activity would be to have each individual write down on separate post it notes—3 benefits to parent involvement for the parent.*

On 3 separate sticky notes, have the write down three benefits of parent involvement for the organization.

Once they have completed this, have them stick their answers on the wall, one side for parent benefit one side for organization benefits. Then have each small group take 5-8 benefits from the wall and discuss, adding to the list any they come up with in the small group. They would report back to the large group their "top" 3-5 benefits.

How Do You See Me?

TIME: 30 minutes

Section Purpose:

Provide participants with the opportunity to identify the stereotypes and preconceived ideas that we carry of each other and ourselves.

ACTIVITY

NOTE TO TRAINER: Please see note at end of this section!

Divide the participants in two groups to complete this exercise. Ask the first group to be "practitioners" and brainstorm the myths, biases and assumptions made about "parents" on a flipchart. Ask the second group to be "parents" and brainstorm the myths, biases and assumptions made about "practitioners" on a separate flip chart. Have a representative from each group report back to the entire group. Split the group into two "mixed" groups of parents and practitioners. Do not split the group into parent participants and practitioner participants for this exercise.

**Remind participants of the "Guidelines for Brainstorming"*

- *No judging*
- *All ideas are valid*
- *There is no such thing as a "dumb" idea*
- *You do not have to agree with someone's point of view, but listen and respect that they bring a different perspective than you*

From list, have them identify what should be packed for the journey and what should be left behind.

DISCUSSION

Ask the entire group to reflect on the following questions:

- *What does this exercise tell us about the challenges of implementing parent engagement?*
- *What do the comments reveal about stereotypes and/or assumptions that are sometimes held between parents and practitioners - what practical steps could you take to begin to breakdown these stereotypes and assumptions?*
- *If an organization creates a supportive, strength-based environment, how might these assumptions change?*

In order to bridge to the next section, talk about how important it is to be authentic in parent leadership.

Authentic partnership includes upholding commitments made to parents, ensuring the practitioners' and programs' credibility.

Ask the participants to brainstorm ways to set the stage for parent leadership and convince their organizations to engage parents. Distribute a list of strategies and practical tools to convince the decision-makers to make a commitment to engaging parents in the work of the organization.

Share success stories of organizations building coalitions and collaborating to include parents.

OPTIONAL

****Trainer might use the continuum before the exercise and after to see if exercise influences their ideas. (Agree on one side/Disagree on the other)**

Continuum questions might include:

- All parents think the system is out to get them.

- Practitioners don't understand what it is like on the "other side of the desk".
- Both parents and practitioners always have the child's best interest at heart.
- We are always working toward the same goals.
- Sometimes we take different roads to get to the same place.

****NOTE TO TRAINER:** This section is about bias and stereotypes. Sensitive topics may arise during the discussions. It is very important to debrief this section in such a way that everyone feels they have been heard and that people do not end with their feelings hurt. Keys to remember when debriefing:

It's important to know where you are before you can get to where you want to go

Don't take what is said personally. It is someone else's perspective based on situations that you do not know

Focus on the way out of the problem, this exercise is not so much about what someone says, or whether right or wrong, it's the perspective, **HOW DO WE MOVE PAST IT? What is the solution?**

Gaining Support from Decision-Makers

TIME: 10 minutes

Section Purpose:

To have participants begin to think about the level of support they currently have from decision makers.

Develop some initial thoughts about a stronger parent engagement program.

Identify some tangible ways to gain support from decision makers.

Have audio clip of Nancy and Carla ready to play.

ACTIVITY

Play the audio clip of Nancy and Carla. What was important to Nancy in being an involved and influential parent leader?

DISCUSSION

Guide participants through the discussion questions about what a more successful parent engagement program would look like in their community.

This situation can be real, or can be what they want to happen. The point of this process is to get participants to begin to think about what they want their parent engagement program to look like and how to begin to move in that direction.

NOTE TO TRAINER: This exercise will begin to prepare them for tomorrow's action planning activity.

You could set it up like this:

When discussing this with them, be sure to ask for details.

If you were going to share a success story about your community's parent engagement what would it be? (This doesn't

have to be real at this time. What would you want the success story to be?) Write down what that would look like:

What exactly does it look like?

What is the success?

What kinds of things happen at the meetings?

What are people saying about the program?

What are people doing to show more unity/cooperation?

What would people be saying about your stronger parent engagement program?

How would you describe to "outsiders" what you did to help influence decision makers and create a stronger parent engagement program?

**This last questions would lead to question 2 on the worksheet.*

After you lead the group through the discussion and have them brainstorm on their own what they might do to gain support,

Refer them to *Suggestions for Gaining Support from Decision Makers* located on following page in participant guide.

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FAMILY FEUD!

TIME: 45 minutes

Section Purpose:

To identify and review fears, barriers and obstacles for parents and organizations.

ACTIVITY

Prep:

Family Feud
Power Point
set up ahead
of time.

Bell or
buzzer for
participants

Prizes

Divide the participants into two different "families" for a round of *Family Feud*. Using the music and game show format, ask participants to identify:

- Roles of parents
- Roles of practitioners
- Benefits of parent leadership
- Common fears and obstacles to parent leadership

After completing each round, highlight the handouts *Fears, Barrier, Obstacles and Challenges* that match each *Family Feud* categories. These are found in the participant manual pages beginning at page 36.

OPTIONAL

If you are unable to play Family Feud, discussion/learning could occur by the forced choices game:

To discuss fears and barriers use the forced choices to get participants up and moving and discussing key fears.

Have them stand up and go to a somewhat open space.

Put a sign on one side of the room that says **Parent Fears**

Put a sign on the other side of the room that says **Agency Fears**

As you read each fear, have them choose parent fear or agency fear.

Please note; there are some fears that are both parent and agency. This would be an opportunity to discuss with participants some of the commonalities shared by both groups.

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Who Will Go With Me? Parent Leadership Stories

TIME: 40 minutes

Section Purpose:

Identify from all strengths and deficits that we've discussed so far, what do we take/or keep in mind on our journey and what must we leave behind.

ACTIVITY:

This is an opportunity for the parent trainer to tell their "story." Also, inform participants they will be welcomed to share their personal journeys of parent leadership. It might be helpful to approach parents and practitioners before training about telling their story. These can also be interspersed throughout training.

NOTE TO TRAINER: In this section the discussion will focus around the things we need to remember from our earlier discussions. Those include: awareness that we all have fears, both sides, in making changes; there are barriers that we don't want to take with us, but they are hard to move, so we must take creativity and thinking outside the box to overcome the barriers. Most everyone involved has a desire to make the partnership work but again, so much can get in the way. If we all pack a commitment to the process, then in the end, we can achieve success.

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What Must I Pack? Nurturing Parent Leadership

TIME: 40 minutes

Section Purpose:

Identify the behaviors and activities demonstrated by someone that indicate they are ready to move toward a leadership position.

ACTIVITY

Refer participants to Parent Leadership Commitment and Roles in the Resource guide.

Divide participants into 3-5 small groups. This exercise will include having each small group "teach" the larger group.

Each small group will be assigned a topic below. Information for reference is in the resource guide with the same title.

The topics include:

- ◆ Characteristics of Parent's Ready to Be Leaders
- ◆ How to Nurture Parent Leadership **and** Generating and Sustaining Commitment
- ◆ Guidelines for Parent Leadership **and** Continuum of Parent Leadership
- ◆ Elements of Collaboration
- ◆ Continuum of Parent Engagement/Involvement/Empowerment

Instructions to the small groups:

- ◆ Review your material briefly. Each group is going to create a "t-shirt" that will include:

- ◆ They can draw the tee shirt on their flipchart paper or just write it on the paper.
- ◆ A slogan for their topic (a slogan is a short blurb that describes the mission or main idea. For example the NIKE slogan is "Just Do It", Coke is "Its The Real Thing". Be creative. Have fun with it.
- ◆ A logo for their topic. (A logo is a picture or illustration that visually describes them, ie., NIKE logo is the swoosh. Be creative.

They will present to the group:

- ◆ What they feel is the most important on their list of items in having someone "ride" with them on the trip.
- ◆ What they might do to help their travel partners get ready for the trip. (Ways that they could support or help them along the way.)

Remember, auditory, visual and kinesthetic. You can present info however you choose as a group.

Optional Activity: Balloon Exercise

- Ask for one volunteer to play the parent role for this activity. This person sits in a chair in the front of the room.
- The other participants are each given a balloon, a numbered scenario, or both (depending on the size of the audience). The scenarios can be found in the resource guide of the participant's manual on page 100. Before the training, reproduce and cut each scenario on a separate strip of paper.

- Instruct the participants to blow up their balloon and tie it off.
- Inform the group that they are going to experience a “day in the life of a parent leader.” After each person has blown up their balloon, have the participants read the scenarios, in numbered order, out loud so the rest of the group can hear.
- As the scenarios are read, a person brings a balloon up to the parent in the chair, and hands it to them.
- After all scenarios are read and the parent has been handed all the balloons, debrief using the following questions:
 - To the parent: how do they feel? Overwhelmed? Tired? Just another day?
 - To the participants: how did it feel to be handing over all those burdens to the parent? Be sure to point out anything that you heard participant say during the exercise that may have shown how the participants felt about it, or that they were trying to be helpful.
 - What were the strengths that this parent brought to the table (excellent balance of balloons, creativity in managing all the burdens, etc).
 - How does this represent real life for parent leaders? For practitioners?
 - What could have been done differently in the scenarios that would have encouraged the parent leader to stay involved? What about ways the organization could collaborated to make the parent's life easier? How might we have nurtured this parent leader's skills in a better, more appropriate way?

How will we know When We Get There?

TIME: 20 minutes

ACTIVITY

Show Circle of Parents Video. This video was filmed by parents involved in parent leadership through Circle of Parents. It can be obtained by contacting Circle of Parents.

Arrange for a TV and VCR/CD player to be present for the training. Queue the video/CD to the beginning of the video. Test that the system works and is set at the correct volume during a break in the training. Have CD & VHS both available.

OPTIONAL ACTIVITY: If the Circle of Parents video is unavailable, you may play the NPR Story Corps audio files, Art, Brenda, Nancy and/or Sam.

Action Planning for the Future

TIME: 15 minutes

Section Purpose:

To complete the steps necessary for an accurate action plan.

Let participants know that the rest of the day will be spent creating the destination of their training team. What is the action plan to take what you've learned the 36 hours and how you will implement it.

So, Lets get started.

Destination

TIME: 15 minutes

Section Purpose:

To have participants identify where they would like to go in their parent involvement journey.

Action planning, just like the journey of parent leadership, takes time and begins with the end in mind. Just like we've done in the training, just like with the training exercises, you have to think about where you are going.

Have each state team get together to complete the action planning process.

ACTIVITY/BRAINSTORM

Each team member must answer the following question:

- ◆ A year from now, if you had a stronger parent leadership program and more parent leaders as a result, what does that look like?

Brainstorm these ideas first. Just write down in the circle on page 50, a few ideas about what it looks like.

ONLY AFTER participants have identified their destination, then have them discuss the following questions:

NOTE TO TRAINER: As they talk about it, don't forget to include the details.

- ◆ What are people saying about it?
- ◆ What are you doing every day, week or month to keep it going?
- ◆ How long did it take to get there?
- ◆ What do you think have been the key ingredients in making it successful?

Current Reality

TIME: 25 minutes

Section Purpose:

Identify the current strengths, weaknesses, benefits and dangers of the participant's identified goals.

INFORM

Current reality provides an opportunity to discuss what you have, both positive and negative to take on your trip. It's the "what shall I pack of action planning?".

There are 4 major parts to anyone's current reality. Those are:

Strengths

Weaknesses

Benefits

Dangers

What do they all mean?

Strengths- this is asking you to think about, what strengths do you have to get you to your destination? This needs to include the tangible and intangible items. Examples of this might include: resources-maybe someone has made a donation to support more training or you've acquired funding; maybe your team is excited and motivated to make things happen, positive attitude; new members that want to make things change, an organization that wants to make this work. Anything you can think of that would be a strength, should be listed here.

Weaknesses-what are the things that might get in the way? What could get in your way of accomplishing your goal? Again, include the tangible and intangible. Examples of this might include: disagreements on the team that cannot be resolved; not enough visibility in the community-parents don't even know you exist; low energy members-people who are tired and stretched too thin.

Benefits-This is different than strengths. This would be, if you arrived at your destination, what would be the benefits? Include tangible and intangible. Examples of this might include: Stronger network of parents to help out in school mentors for other parents, better relationship with the organizations etc.

Dangers-This is different than weaknesses. This would be, if you arrived at your destination, what might be the dangers? This sounds sort of funny in a way, how could doing something positive, making the community better, have any dangers?

Sometimes a new direction can be challenging or scary to others. Organization or people might feel threatened by the change or the fact that someone else can do their job. It may be that reaching the destination might create so much work, there would not be enough people to get it done well and in the end, this could make things worse. This information should not be a "show stopper", again just a brainstorming list of what the reality in your situation is.

After all four lists are completed, look at those for a moment. What does your current reality say about your destination from the organization's perspective? Does it still look doable? Scary? Worth it? Does any part of it need to be changed? Are you committed to doing it and making it work?

Current Reality Organizational Perspective

Review Current Reality from the organizational perspective and parent perspective based on information on page 52.

Current Reality Parent Perspective

INFORM

After reviewing the current realities, let group know that now it's time to move into the more active part of action planning.

What is Action Planning?

TIME: 45 minutes

Section Purpose:

Clarify the key components of an action plan.

Review following information and information in Participant's Guide to walk participants through action planning.

INFORM

What things need to occur to make the trip/destination a success? What needs to be done to get there? Remember: don't get ahead of yourself-don't think about the who, when or how right now, just the WHAT needs to be done to get to your destination.

(It might be good to list every item on large sticky notes. Making sure that you put only one item/idea per note and then stick them on a wall somewhere. This will make it easy to move information around as you plan.)

After you identify all of the things that need to be done, use the Action Planning Worksheet to complete the rest...who, when, how. Don't forget deadlines, these are most important. Use information in the resource guide that we have already reviewed to provide ideas and specific tasks to accomplish.

Before starting on these, review the Guidelines for Action Planning in the Resource Guide. Details about action plans are critical in the success of the plan. Being SMART...

Specific—what exactly are you going to do?

Measurable-how will you know when you have done it.

Achievable-the task *CAN* be done...its not impossible or unrealistic

Realistic-that it can be done.

Time bound-it will be accomplished by a certain date.

The Action Planning Process

TIME: 30 minutes

REVIEW

Pages 56-63 in the participant guide are reference materials and worksheets for the Action Planning Process.

Review the action planning process on page 56, in the Participant Manual.

Prepare flip charts or PowerPoint prior to the training that contain the planning language definitions and the action-planning wheel. Post these

Page 57 and 58 contain a list of action words that could be used as a reference in the action planning development.

Pages 59 and 60 include more guidelines to reference when completing the action plan.

Review/reference all pages (56-63) with group and have groups complete their action plan.

NOTE TO TRAINER: Each trainer should serve as a consultant to a group(s), providing practical ideas and sharing his/her own experiences of developing and working within collaborative leadership.

NOTE TO TRAINER The rest of the Trainer's Manual does not follow consistent page numbering with Participant Guide. All information necessary to complete tasks are in Participant Guide.

Action Planning Reporting

TIME: 35 minutes

State teams will report their parent leadership planning process to the larger group and discuss the variety of ideas, goals and strategies. Encourage teams to make notes of ideas presented by other states to use in revising their plan after they have returned home.

To review and wrap up:

Have groups talk about what they think are the most important piece of their action plan?

Evaluation and Wrap Up

TIME: 20 minutes

Give participants a few moments to reflect on any remaining questions they have. Ask the following:

What is one thing we've done in training that you enjoyed doing?

What was the most frustrating part?

What is the one thing we've covered in the last day and a half that will help you be better at parent leadership in your community?

Review the list of expectations made at the beginning of training and make sure all items were addressed. Thank the participants for sharing their expertise and for their active participation in the training session. Distribute and collect the evaluations.

