



Engaging with Afterschool Families Now
IQA Webinar | July 30, 2020
Responses from the Participant Chat Pod

Webinar participants from 21st CCLC programs shared valuable strategies and resources they are using to stay connected to students and families during the COVID-19 disruption. We captured their comments here to make them easy to share among program staff.

Guiding Question 1: Who has already done some work to understand family needs? For those that have already done some of this work, what was the most effective strategy you used? What did you learn? What needs did you discover?

Participant responses/strategies:

- We collaborate with the school and create our network on Dojo which most parents are already connected to.
- Calls, text, emails, social media
- Using apps that we use throughout the school year we are able to use Remind App and WhatsApp to send links, resources, to send information about food pantries, testing, and also content for after school programs
- Social Media, Phone, E-mail.
- Most are not ready to send their children back to school. There is a lot of anxiety among families and staff.

Guiding Question 2: What are some of the key lessons from your program that you think families could use to create learning environments at home?

Participant responses/strategies:

- Complete understanding: Understand why families or students express themselves a certain way. It's important not to assume and jump to conclusions, many of the times something is happening at home or during home (especially during quarantine).
- I am considering offering homework help at later times of the day. Rather than run from 3-5, I may offer 5-7pm so the parents can be involved as well.
- Being made aware of what expectations the school has for the children.
- Access to technology
- Continuing with our virtual programs
- Homework assistance
- Keep up with our virtual help and resources.
- Training for parents to understand platforms schools are using to help lower stress when tech has problems
- Understanding of programs that students are using to complete their work





- Bilingual support if needed
- Providing clear and simple guidelines in how to explain and assist student. Schedule of available tutorial sessions for students and parents. We provide monthly kits of materials for activities that can engage all family members and student.

Guiding Question 3: How has your program demonstrated the relationships superpower? How do you contribute to creating a compassionate, heart-first environment for your families?

Participant responses/strategies:

- Helped families with financial support
- The parents feel comfortable reaching out to me and I put them in touch with our summer free lunch program, access to technology. I've also shared local resources that pertained to food drives, diaper giveaways etc.
- HELP PARENT BE A LINKAGE TO SCHOOL ADMINISTRATION AS FAR AS TECHNOLOGY RESOURCES
- Parents continue to reach out because they value all the information given to them throughout this pandemic, meals and other community resources
- We have used our existing relationships to connect with families by phone, sharing resources and fun at home activities. In addition the youth have become more comfortable and vocal during these times.
- We did weekly pick ups with families for summer programming. It was time families could chat about their week. We were able to pass out backpack for blessings. We also encourage parent to send picture and show off how well they were doing with programming.

Guiding Question 4: What are some ways that you are innovating around interest-based engagement and programming for your young people and families now?

Participant responses/strategies:

- Our summer school program had a google hangout with the kiddos and the students were able to give input on the direction summer school went. We set the general theme and the rest was up to the kids.
- Kids really enjoy the kahoot app and the trivia activities and parents enjoy the fact that their children stay active in our summer braingain activities
- We've offered a virtual summer camp for the youth!
- Virtual summer jobs
- My principal and I actually filmed virtual field trips this summer and shared them with our students.
- My kids loved the virtual escape rooms using math
- Sowing Good Seeds, virtual gardening. Gardening kits were provided for every family, including pots, tools, seeds and gardening guidelines. Making Waves in the kitchen, virtual cooking.