



TRAUMA
informed

Family Engagement Toolkit






Introduction

Family and caregiver engagement is a critical component of becoming a trauma-informed Club or Youth Center. Caregivers and caregivers are the primary support in their child’s development and providing for their needs. Engaging families proactively creates an opportunity for partnership and mutual collaboration in supporting their children to reach their fullest potential. Families can provide a unique perspective on the strengths, interests, areas for growth, and needs of their children.

Family engagement should be rooted in the 7 Elements of a Trauma-Informed Club. Club professionals should work to incorporate these 7 elements into all of their interactions with caregivers and caregivers.



Engaging families early and often helps Clubs and Youth Centers to intentionally integrate the 7 elements in the following ways:

	Safety: Learn from families more about the physical and emotional safety needs of their child. Work to integrate feedback and suggestions to create a safer Club.
	Trust: Share openly, and transparently about the Club expectations, supports, limitations, and work to find solutions to support their child.
	Awareness: Learn from families about stressful, challenging, and traumatic experiences that may have contributed to their child’s development and abilities. Use this knowledge to create a better Club experience for the young person.
	Equity: Learn from families about the unique needs of their child, and work to integrate practices that ensure their needs are being met.
	Empowerment, Voice & Choice: Create a space for caregivers to voice their ideas, opinions, concerns, and feedback. Provide opportunities for them to be heard, and collaborate on finding solutions.



Mutual Connection: Work to achieve true partnership by eliminating the power structures that exist between Club professionals and caregivers/caregivers.



Connection & Growth: Build relationships with caregivers, learn about each other, and grow together to build a healthier, stronger Club.

How to Use this Guide

This toolkit provides Club professionals with a number of helpful tools to proactively engage and partner with caregivers in the Club experience. Use this guide in collaboration with the [Family Engagement Planning Guide](#) to create a more comprehensive family engagement experience.

- **Family Orientation Agenda:** Use this tool to help guide your orientation process for new families at your Club or Youth Center.
- **Caregiver Letter:** Use this tool to inform caregivers of your commitment to partnering with them to provide the best Club experience for their child.
- **Caregiver Newsletter:** Use this template to create your own monthly newsletter to share information and updates with families with caregivers.
- **Family Engagement Planning Form:** Use this tool to improve your Club or Youth Center's current family engagement process.
- **Caregiver Meeting Form:** Use this tool to help guide your meetings with parents and caregivers.
- **Family Needs Assessment:** Use this tool to assess the needs of the families you serve.
- **Referral Form:** Use this tool when making referrals to external agencies for additional support.
- **Family Night Agenda Template:** Use this template to help you plan a fun and engaging family night experience to improve your relationships with parents and caregivers.
- **Family Night Satisfaction Survey:** Use this survey to gather feedback from families on their Family Night experience.
- **Creating Family Advisory Councils:** Use this tool to learn more about how to create a family advisory council to better partner with caregivers.
- **Facilitating Family Listening Session:** Use this tool to learn more about the needs, desires, thoughts, and goals of the families you serve.
- **Family Survey:** Use this tool to learn more about existing families and new families at your Club or Youth Center.
- **Youth Survey:** Use this tool to learn more about existing members and new members at your Club or Youth Center.

Family Orientation Agenda

Use this tool to help guide your orientation process for new families at your Club or Youth Center. Family Orientation is the first important step in proactive and ongoing family engagement. It is best to provide an orientation to all new families within the first few days of them starting at your Club. Your orientation process should be rooted in trauma-informed elements to ensure that families understand the Club experience and expectations, and feel a sense of belonging when joining this new community.

- **Welcome and Introductions**
- **Community Builder**
- **Boys & Girls Club Overview**
 - Mission and Vision
 - Organization/Club History
- **Membership Information**
 - Rules and Expectations
 - Member Handbook
- **Programming**
 - Program Areas: Education, College and Career, Health and Wellness, Sports and Recreation, Arts, Leadership and Service
 - Program Structure and Format
- **Policies and Procedures**
 - Safety
 - Communication
 - Check-In and Check-Out
 - Technology (Acceptable Use Policy)
 - Transportation
 - Closures
 - Fees and Financial Assistance
 - Visitor/Volunteer Policies
- **Q&A**
- **Tour**

Caregiver Letter

Dear Caregiver,

At our Boys & Girls Club, we understand that every person has unique lived experiences that impact the way we learn, think, grow, and connect with others. We are committed to becoming an organization that understands and responds to these experiences and how they have built resilience and growth.

We know how valuable elements of safety and trust are to building our relationship with you. By working together, we can support the health and well-being of you and your children that moves us forward to awareness and equity based on your voice and mutual collaboration. Through this empowerment, our hope is to connect and grow with you for the duration of your time with us.

What does this mean for you? This is a continuous journey with no endpoint. Year over year, staff, youth, families, and communities needs grow and change and we must continue to do the same. To help us be as responsive as possible to your needs, your feedback during this journey is precious and greatly valued. In the coming weeks, you will receive additional information about focus groups, family events, and communication tools that will be used.

Being resilience focused simply means putting people and their needs first. Youth, family, and staff in our organization bring a unique set of experiences, values, and needs. We appreciate your partnership and look forward to great things to come!

In Partnership,

[Club/Youth Center Name]

Family Newsletter Template

 <p>BOYS & GIRLS CLUBS</p>	<h1>Month & Year</h1>	
<p>Family of the Month</p>	<p>Available Services and Resources</p>	<p>Upcoming Events</p>
<p>Partner Spotlight</p>	<p>Reminders</p>	
<p>555-555-5555 club@bgc.org</p>	<p>At-Home Activity Feature</p>	

Family Engagement Planning Form

Use this tool to help start or improve your Club/Youth Center's family engagement program. It is best to complete it on an annual basis and/or any time that new leadership or partners become involved with the program. Family engagement should be rooted in trauma-informed practice. Trauma-informed practice is an organizational development approach that involves trauma-informed principles across all aspects of your Club organization and integrates the 7 Elements of a Trauma-Informed Club.

*NOTE: This form can be adapted to a digital format like Google Forms to utilize in collecting data related to the plan

1. Our Club/Youth Center conducted a needs assessment in _____ (month, year) and determined the following priority family engagement needs among the those we serve:

- | | | |
|--|---|--------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Access to basic needs | <input type="checkbox"/> Caregiver workshops | <input type="checkbox"/> _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Access to medical treatment | <input type="checkbox"/> Changing Demographics | <input type="checkbox"/> _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Academic support | <input type="checkbox"/> Employment/Job Training | <input type="checkbox"/> _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Gang Involvement | <input type="checkbox"/> Access to Higher Education | <input type="checkbox"/> _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Substance Abuse education | | <input type="checkbox"/> _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Advocating for their child | | <input type="checkbox"/> _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Networking | | <input type="checkbox"/> _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Career Opportunities | | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Access to Social Services | | |

2. Successful outcomes of our Club/Youth Center's family engagement program will be defined and measured in the following way(s):

Strengthen, enhance and/or expand family engagement programs for current and new Club families, specifically in the areas of:

- Voice, choice and empowerment
 - Opportunities to provide feedback
 - Collaborative opportunities for caregivers
 - Other: _____
- Mutual collaboration
 - Involvement with policy and procedure review

- Involvement in policy and procedure development
- Caregiver mentors
- Other: _____
- Safety
 - Caregiver feedback on physical and emotional safety through surveys
 - Caregiver volunteers for safety checks
 - Other: _____
- Trust
 - Timely communication of program calendar
 - Timely communication of events
 - Weekly outreach
 - Monthly outreach
 - Coffee Chats
 - Other: _____

*NOTE: Utilize current Trauma Informed assessment data to generate additional outcomes related to goals

3. How will you collect feedback?

- Online surveys
- In person surveys
- Family council meetings
- Family listening session
- Word of mouth
- Other: _____

4. Our Club will do the following to follow up on concerns and communicate back to families:

- Formal letter from Senior Leadership
- Informal message through email
- Social media
- Personal meeting
- Other: _____

5. Families will receive initial Club orientation and ongoing resources and support:

- Sample agenda for family orientation:

1. Welcome and Introduction
2. Community builder
3. Club overview: mission, vision, history
4. Membership information
5. Programming
6. *Policies & Procedures*
7. *Ways to be involved*
8. *Q&A and Tour*

- Access to Caregiver Advisory Council
- Surveys to measure satisfaction and Club experience
- Consistent communication utilizing the following methods: _____
- Social media
- Feedback opportunities

6. We will monitor and verify that family engagement has taken place in the following way(s):

- Attendance records
- Planned events
- Family Council meetings
- Family advocate involvement
- Referrals for services
- Other: _____

7. We will ensure family engagement takes place in an appropriate setting in the following ways:

- Implementing group agreements
- Mood checks during family events
- Feedback from caregiver
- Other: _____

8. We will recognize and appreciate our families in the following way(s):

- Family dinners
- Family of the week/month/year
- Care packages for families
- Raffles/drawings related to caregiver participation
- Special events
- Other: _____

9. We will evaluate the quality of our family engagement and whether it is meeting the desired outcomes as follows:

Monitor and report the percentage of active family engagement partners representing each of the following groups: non-profit service organization and/or faith-based organization; private industry; secondary education provider; and post-secondary education provider or vocational training provider.

- Monitor and report the increase in the number of new families.
- Monitor and report the percentage increase in involvement in family engagement programs
- Monitor and report the percentage of families successfully completing orientation
- Monitor and report the percentage of families provided support and resources based on needs assessment
- Number of new families mentored
- Number of family mentors
- Number of families involved in engagement programs since the beginning of the program cycle
- Number of families surveys completed
- Number of listening sessions or focus groups
- Participation in youth advisory council
- Participation in family advisory council
- Increase in # of families that feel welcome at the Club/Youth Center
- Number of letters, emails, messages to follow up on concerns (# reported/# closed)
- Number of family council meetings
- Number of family engagement events/activities
- Number of non-duplicated families involved
- Number of events co-planned with caregivers
- Number of policy and procedure changes informed by caregivers
- Number of new policies and procedures informed by caregivers

10. Partnership/Collaboration

- Active family engagement partners representing each of the following groups:
 - Number of non-profit service organization and/ or faith-based organization
 - Number of private industries
 - Number of secondary education provider
 - Number of post-secondary education provider or vocational training provider

Parent/Caregiver Meeting Form

Use this tool to help guide your meetings with parents and caregivers. This worksheet will allow you to partner with caregivers to ensure their child is successful and gets the support they need when at your Club or Youth Center. This tool can be used proactively to gather information when first meeting parents, and reactively during behavior meetings with parents. The questions on this worksheet are strengths-based in nature and the information you gather will help ensure the young person is successful. Remember, all parent and caregiver meetings should always be guided by the 7 trauma-informed elements.

Date: _____ Child's Name: _____

Child's Strengths:

Child's Interests (e.g., hobbies, activities, school subjects):

What additional information should we know that might help us to better support and engage your child?

What goals and aspirations do you have for your child?

How can we work together towards achieving those goals?

What is your approach to behavior management? How do you deal with challenging behavior at home?

How can we work together to reinforce positive behaviors?

What is the best way for us to communicate?

Family Needs Assessment

Use this tool to assess the needs of the families you serve. Families may be struggling, and you may not even know it. It can be uncomfortable to ask for help and this reduces the likelihood that they will get the help they need. This tool will help you gather the information you need to provide assistance when families are in need in a discreet and confidential way. You can conduct a needs assessment in person, or families can fill out the form and return it to you on their own time.

Recommended Best Practices:

- In-person Family Needs Assessments should be done in a private space and guided by the 7 trauma-informed elements.
- Ensure that families are easily able to access this form – ex: provide it during New Member Orientation, link it on your website, leave copies available at the front desk.
- Make sure families know who to drop the form off.
- Follow-up should be completed within 48 hours of receiving a Family Needs Assessment.
- If you do not have the resources on site to provide assistance, work with local providers like United Way 211 to make referrals to agencies that can help.

Date: _____

Contact Information

Parent/Caregiver Name			
Phone Number		Alternative #	
Email Address			
Parent/Caregiver Name			
Phone Number		Alternative #	
Email Address			

Youth Demographics

Child Name		DOB	
Child Name		DOB	
Child Name		DOB	
Child Name		DOB	

Youth Education

1. What are some of your children's strengths that you would like us to know about? Please be as specific as possible.

2. What are some areas of growth that you would like us to focus on with your children? Please be as specific as possible.

3. Do any of your children have learning difficulties that we should be aware of? If so, please share.

4. What strategies have worked well in helping your children learn?

5. Do any of your children participate in any other afterschool/recreational programs? If so, please share.

Family Demographics

Annual Income

<input type="checkbox"/> Less than \$10,000	<input type="checkbox"/> \$10,000-\$24,999	<input type="checkbox"/> \$25,000-\$49,999	<input type="checkbox"/> \$50,000-\$74,999	<input type="checkbox"/> \$75,000 or more
Do you children receive free or reduced-price lunch at school?			<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No

Support Services

Is your family interested in adult education classes such as GED classes, financial classes, English classes, etc.? If so, please list any specific topics you would be interested in.

Is your family interested in support finding employment?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
Does your family need support finding stable housing?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
Does your family need support finding childcare?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
Does your family need support accessing transportation?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
Does your family need support accessing nutritious food?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
Does your family need support accessing affordable health insurance?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
Does your family need support accessing medical treatment?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No

What additional information would you like to share so we can best support you?

Participant's Signature

Date

Referral Form

Use this tool to help gather information when making a referral. Sometimes your Club or Youth Center may not be able to provide the support a child or family needs, and that's okay! There are many resources – both national and local – that can help fill in the gaps. Knowing when and how to make a referral is an important component of trauma-informed family engagement. It is best to set up a meeting with the parent or caregiver to gather the information outlined on this form. Your meeting should be guided by the 7 trauma-informed elements.

Information		
Guardian Name:	Relationship to Child:	DOB:
Address:		
Preferred Phone:	Okay to Text? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	Best Time/Day to Contact:
Email:		
Preferred Language:		Transportation?
Child Name:		Date of Birth:
School:		Grade:
Services Requested		
<input type="checkbox"/> Basic Needs Clothing, Food, Transportation, Housing, Medical, Vision, Hygiene Items, etc.	<input type="checkbox"/> Mental Health Counseling, Alcohol and Drug Use, etc.	<input type="checkbox"/> Academic/Educational Truancy Prevention/ ESL, GED, etc.
Reason for Referral:		
Authorization		

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Guardian Aware of Referral? Yes No Explain:

Parent/Guardian or Responsible Person's Authorization: I hereby consent to an exchange of confidential information between Boys & Girls Clubs of _____ and appropriate agencies concerning my child/self in order to enhance the treatment and follow-up of the condition for which this referral is made.

Parent/Guardian Signature: _____ Date: _____

Family Night Agenda Template

Use this tool to help plan a Family Night at your Club or Youth Center. Family Nights are an excellent way to increase your Clubs proactive family engagement efforts. They allow staff and families to build relationships in a fun and positive way, increasing their sense of belonging in the Club community, and strengthening your relationship as partners in their child's success. This tool will help you plan a fun and engaging night for families! When planning remember that all youth and parent interactions should be guided by the 7 elements of a trauma-informed Club.

Recommended Participation:

15-30 families

Supplies Needed:

- Conversation Starters
-

Preparation

- **Set** up a table with nametags and markers.
- **Print** the Conversation Starters handout and place on each table for individuals to discuss during dinner.
- **Have** the Group Agreements on display so that families can see them.
-

Community Meal (30 minutes)

- **Give** a warm welcome to each family member and caregiver as they arrive.
- **Invite** participants to write their name on a nametag.
- **Thank** everyone for coming.
- **Encourage** them to choose a few questions from the Conversation Starters handout on their tables to discuss during dinner.

Club Presentation (10 minutes)

-
-
-

Community Builder: (10 minutes)

- **Explain** that Community Builders help youth build supportive relationships, familiarity and trust among youth and staff.
-
-

Main Activity: Family Night (45 minutes)

Step 1:

-
-
-

Step 2:

-
-
-

Step 3:

-
-
-

Reflection (10 minutes)

- **Explain** that leaving space for reflection creates opportunities for youth to review what they have done, what they learned, and how it may apply to or influence their lives.
- **Pose** the following questions, inviting families to discuss amongst themselves.
 - **What?** –
 - **So What?** –
 - **Now What?** –
- **Ask** for volunteers who are willing to share their responses with the group.

Recognition (5 minutes)

- **Explain** that at the end of each program session youth close with recognition for their peers as a way to build relationships and connection.
- **Invite** youth and families to provide recognition using the PET framework – Positive Affirmation, Encouragement or Thankfulness.

Closing (5 minutes)

- **End** the presentation and invite family members to contact staff at any time with questions or concerns or to find out more about activities at the Club or Youth Center.
- **Pass** out the Family Night Satisfaction Survey to collect feedback.

Family Night Conversation Starters

What foods are special to your family?

What activities does your family like to do together?

How does your family celebrate holidays or special occasions?

What is a happy or silly memory you have of your family?

Where does your family come from? What is your family's background?

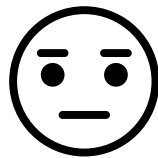
What is one thing that makes your family special or unique?

Family Night Satisfaction Survey

1. Did you like Family Night at the Boys & Girls Club? Circle your response.



I didn't like it.



It was OK.



I liked it!

2. What did you like about tonight?

3. What could we improve?

4. What ideas do you have for a future Family Night?

Creating Family Advisory Councils

Use this tool to help start or improve your Club's advisory council program. By definition, an advisory council is a volunteer group formed to give advice and support to your organization. Advisory councils should be rooted in the 7 Elements of a Trauma-Informed Club. Trauma-informed practice is an organizational development approach that involves trauma-informed principles across all aspects of your Club organization and integrate the 7 Elements of a Trauma-Informed Club. Specifically, the development and implementation of advisory councils focuses on the elements of voice, choice, & empowerment and mutual collaboration.

Two Types of Advisory Councils

1. **Family:** any adult caregiver or group of caregivers who play a role in a child's cognitive, social, and emotional development.
2. **Youth:** anyone eligible for membership at the club/youth center. Age limits can be determined locally.

Purpose/Responsibility of the Advisory Council

- Serves as advisory resource to administration and staff of the organization or one of its programs.
- Promotes improved relationships between families, youth, and staff.
- Provides a vehicle for communication between families, youth, and staff.
- Provides a venue for families and youth to provide input into policy and program development.
- Provides an opportunity for families and youth to review recommendations referred to the council by staff or administration.
- Provides an opportunity for families and youth to actively participate in improving quality, safety, and the Club/Youth Center experience.
- Channels information, needs, and concerns to staff and administration.
- Actively helps implement changes.
- Provides input into the training program for staff.
- Collaborates as partners with staff and administration in the planning and operation of overall Club/Youth Center or specific programs.
- Provides opportunities for staff to learn from the perspectives of families and youth.
- Provides a safe venue for families and youth to provide input.
- Serves as a coordinating mechanism for families and youth.

Benefits of Advisory Councils

- Provides an effective mechanism for receiving and responding to feedback.
- Results in more efficient planning to ensure that services really meet the needs and priorities of families and youth served.
- Leads to increased understanding and partnership between families, youth, staff, and administration.
- Promotes respectful, effective partnerships between and families, youth, staff, and administration.
- Offers a forum for developing creative solutions to problems and challenges faced by the program or organization.
- Assists the organization in achieving its safety, quality, and trauma informed outcomes.
- Supplies a link between the organization, its surrounding community, and community groups.

Note: The council should not be seen as a place where an individual caregiver or youth brings their personal grievances about club/youth center experiences to be dealt with and solved. Personal experiences should be used as examples when discussing a program or service. Advisory members should also bring experiences and perceptions of other families and youth to the discussion. The council should not be seen as a support group.

Furthermore, Youth Advisory Councils should not compete with other leadership programs such as Torch Club or Keystone Club.

Recruitment

- Ask staff for suggestions
- Post and advertise within the units or schools.
- Put notices in websites, social media platforms, and publications.
- Send direct mail to present and former families and youth.

Representing the Families and Youth Served

- Seek families who represent a variety of club/youth center experiences such as age, duration of membership, and programs utilized.
- Include families and youth who have had a broad range of experiences.
- Include families and youth who have both positive as well as negative perceptions of experiences
- Seek families and youth who reflect the diversity of those served by the club/youth center— racial, cultural, religious, socioeconomic, age, educational background, and a variety of family structures.

Seek Families and Youth Who Are Able To:

- Share insights and information about their experiences in ways that others can learn from them.
- See beyond their own personal experiences.
- Show concern for more than one issue or agenda.
- Listen well.
- Respect the perspectives of others.
- Speak comfortably in a group with candor.
- Interact well with many different kinds of people.
- Work in partnership with others.

Council Structure

- Determine structure, size, meeting frequency, operating procedures, and bylaws
 - Smaller groups encourage greater discussion and participation by all members.
 - Most people are more comfortable speaking in a smaller group.
 - It is more challenging to facilitate larger groups and obtain input from everyone.
 - Larger groups will provide a wider range of experiences and input. They also are able to have broader representation of diverse populations.
 - Consider availability of meeting sites to accommodate various sizes of groups.
 - Twelve to eighteen members is usually considered a manageable size.
- Staff membership
 - No more than 3-4 staff should have a permanent place on the council.
 - Other staff can attend depending on topics for discussion.
 - Staff should have easy access to the council.
 - Too many staff will result in families and/or youth not feeling it is their council.
- Terms of membership
 - Consider length of term with rotation being intermittent rather than everyone turning over at once.
 - When their term ends, they can serve as advisors in other ways such as faculty for staff education or on board level committees.
- Compensation/reimbursement
 - Plan for compensation of time, expertise, and/or expenses for families and youth.
 - Consider remuneration for families in the form of a small amount to cover travel expenses, baby-sitting, or other costs that might be incurred.
 - Some families may have difficulty joining the council if they are not given some assistance. Consider providing childcare during meetings if needed.
 - Designate one staff member from the club/youth center to be responsible for reimbursement and other practical or logistical issues for family and youth advisors.
- Officers

- Co-chairs and secretary are the essential officers.
- If possible, provide organizational support to assist with mailings, distributing minutes
- Co-chairs could be two family members or a staff person and family member.
- Suggest selecting one new co-chair each year so there is carryover to the next year.
- Creating Committees
 - You may want to have some permanent committees that could include membership of family members who are not on the council. These might be recruitment, communication, etc.
 - Task forces or ad hoc committees might be identified to work on a specific issue or short-term project. Families/youth who are not on the council would be encouraged to participate—this will increase the number of who participates and provide input as well as help in recruiting long-term advisors.
- Bylaws
 - Operating guidelines/bylaws need to be developed by the council. Bylaws are important because they provide the framework for perceived goals and objectives. Bylaws also legitimize the group and help promote a feeling of an established, well-organized group.
 - Developing bylaws can be time consuming, however, reviewing bylaws from existing advisory boards can save you time. They can be adapted and amended to suit your group's specific needs.
 - Select a small core group to develop the bylaws.
 - Among the issues that could be addressed in the bylaws are:
 - Purpose of the group
 - Vision or mission statement
 - Goals and responsibilities
 - Structure of the group
 - Size of the group
 - Membership qualifications
 - Nominations and elections of members and officers
 - Duties of members and officers
 - Committees and task forces
 - Voting procedures
 - Meetings including options for participation (e.g., virtually)
 - Agendas
 - Expectation for annual assessment of members and council
 - Guidelines of authority
 - Confidentiality and Privacy
 - Leave of absence and termination policies
 - After developing your group's bylaws, present them to the administration for approval. All council members should review, discuss, and amend if necessary and

give final approval. The bylaws should be reviewed annually and revised as necessary.

Meetings Schedule

- Frequency - monthly or quarterly is suggested. Monthly is usually adequate. When meetings are less frequent members lose momentum and involvement. When they are too frequent, members will have trouble attending.
- Days/times - let the council select but may be dependent on room availability. Consider convenience for both families, youth, and staff.

Agenda

The council should develop a list of issues they wish to deal with and “own” the agenda. Staff or other families/youth can add to the agenda. Keep in mind that effective and productive councils are those that align their goals with the strategic priorities of the organization.

Minutes

Minutes should be kept and distributed widely so the activities of the council are made aware to as much of the organization as possible.

Orientation of New Council Members

Orientation could include:

- Introductions and the sharing of personal and family stories of club/youth center experiences.
- The vision and goals of the organization.
- The role of the council, how it fits within the organization’s structure, and how it can assist the organization in achieving its vision and goals.
- The roles and responsibilities of members.
- The roles and responsibilities of officers.
- Expectations for honoring privacy and confidentiality.
- Meeting attendance expectations of members.
- The roles and responsibilities of staff on the council.
- How to be an effective council member.
- How to present issues effectively.
- How to be most effective in collaborating with club/youth center leaders and staff.

Maintaining history

It is important to track accomplishments and disseminate widely. Track issues the council is working on so they do not get lost.

Sustaining the council

- Invest in building leadership skills of members.
- Select families/youth wisely.
- Ensure that the council is representative of families and youth served.
- Maintain balance between new members and committed members with longevity of service.
- Devote time to planning and evaluation of council efforts and impact.
- Set priorities and focus efforts on meaningful collaborative projects.

Not ready for an advisory council?

Consider developing a family/youth workgroup as a precursor to a more formal council. The workgroup is a quick way to get family/youth participation in club/youth center activities. The informal structure of a workgroup may be less threatening. Someone internal or external to the organization can facilitate the workgroup. The latter provides an opportunity for staff, administration, and families to become comfortable over time with new ways of working together. The workgroup is a place where staff, youth, and families can learn and practice new collaborative skills and a place to gain confidence in the collaborative process. It provides an opportunity for natural leaders to emerge. The workgroup can provide invaluable information to staff until a permanent council and/or a variety of other collaborative endeavors are established.

Creating a Council Checklist

- ❑ **Form a work group**
 - Establish a consistent schedule to meet
 - Communicate with all families and youth as appropriate as an open forum
 - Organize informal events that allow for staff, administration, families, and youth to develop positive, supportive relationships
 - Offer collaboration events/activities during events or as seen fit for your organizational schedule

- ❑ **Recruitment**
 - Host an information session for families and youth to learn about your advisory council
 - Assign a staff or volunteer to follow up with all attendees on their desire to volunteer for the council
 - Provide potential council members with your organizations appropriate volunteer or membership application
 - After your council is formed, you may decide to have an advisory council application as well
 - Select advisory council members
 - Schedule meet and greet session to launch the council

- ❑ **Council Structure**
 - Create mission and vision statements for the council
 - Construct bylaws and how the council will operate
 - Install officers and committees as needed to delegate tasks
 - Determine meeting schedule

- ❑ **Sustainability**
 - Review roles and responsibilities through an appropriate onboarding process
 - As appropriate, utilize contracts or agreements for advisory council member commitments
 - Be consistent with meeting schedule
 - Be consistent with communication
 - Maintain history of the advisory council as deemed appropriate at your organization

Resources

For a more comprehensive resource see:

1. Generation On: Game Changers- <http://www.generationon.org/teens/yac>
2. Points of Light- <http://www.pointsoflight.org/>
3. HandsOn Network- <http://www.handsonnetwork.org/>

4. Learning to Give- <http://www.learningtogive.org/>
5. Hassenfeld Children's Hospital NYU Lagone- <https://nyulangone.org/files/building-an-effective-family-advisory-council-absolute-final-081718.pdf>

Facilitating Family Listening Session

Use this tool to help start or improve your Club's family engagement program. Family engagement should be rooted in the 7 Elements of a Trauma-Informed Club. Trauma-informed practice is an organizational development approach that involves trauma-informed principles across all aspects of your Club organization and integrating the 7 Key Elements of a Trauma-Informed Club

At the Boys & Girls Club, we believe that all families regardless of level of education, socio-economic status, and race or ethnicity can contribute to all youth learning and development. Utilizing a family listening session will provide an opportunity to build intentional relationships to ensure the Club/Youth Center is implementing trauma-informed practices that meet the needs of the people you serve.

Welcome & Introduction

- **Introductions** of Caregivers and Organization Staff
- **Icebreaker:** Rose, Bud, and Thorn
 - During introductions, have participants state their rose, bud, and thorn
 - Rose- something positive they have experienced at your organization
 - Bud- something new they would like to see at your organization
 - Thorn- something they have experienced at your organization that was challenging
- **Review** agenda, objectives, and “housekeeping” items
- **Explain**, “we understand that every person has unique, lived experiences that impact the way we learn, think, grown, and connect with others. We are committed to becoming an organization that understands and responds to these experiences and how they have built resilience and growth.”
- **Explain**, “This is a continuous journey with no endpoint. To help us be as responsive as possible to your needs, your participation during this session is precious and greatly valued.

Introduction to Appreciative Inquiry & Topic Choice Selection

- **Ask** “What typically happens when you ask someone for feedback?”
- **Say** “There is a tendency to focus on the negative experiences and then problem solve how to make it better. For example, if we look at family survey results and 70% say they are satisfied with our service, do we focus on that 70%? Or do we focus on why the other 30% aren't satisfied in order to strive for perfection?”
- **Say**, “Appreciative inquiry shifts our mindset focus from problem solving to positive based change. For our purposes, we are going to use appreciate inquiry to focus on the resilience of our organization and the families we serve.

- **Say** “Using appreciative inquiry allows us to be resilience focused. Being resilience focused simply means putting people and their needs first. Youth, family, and staff in our organization brings a unique set of experiences, values, and needs. This “By all, For All” approach not only ensures that all experiences are valued, but also that needed changes are implemented throughout our entire organization.
- **Say**, “Before we start our appreciative inquiry, we need to determine our topic for this session. Our Boys & Girls Club is committed to infusing the 7 elements of trauma-informed practice. They are safety, trust, awareness, equity, voice, choice, & empowerment, mutual collaboration, and connection & growth. What element would we like to focus on today?”

DISCOVERY: What is Working for the Topic?

- **Say**, “Universal, proactive practices are focused on resiliency and built on the foundation of the 7 Elements of Trauma-Informed Club and are interwoven as guiding elements into every policy, procedure, and practice in our organization. As we focus on our topic today, our goal is to work collaboratively and commit to creating positive change together.”
- **Say**, “Discovery phase is the first step of appreciative inquiry. It looks at the whole system, with all stakeholders, and asks **what is working?**”
- **Explain**, “We are going to break up into groups to identify what is working and report back to the whole group.
- **Instructions**
 - Break participants into small groups
 - Keep family members together
 - Make sure there is at least one staff in each group
- **Explain** that within their group, to select a note keeper and a speaker to share out.
- **Use** the handout provided to collect your answers.
- **Allow** 8 minutes for groups to work together before bringing them back to share. This may vary depending on the number of groups.
- **Ask** each a group to share what they discussed with the larger group. Make sure to thank them for their input and participation. We are not solving any problems at this time.

DREAM: What is a Goal for the Topic?

- **Say** “Now that we have identified what is working, we are going to move to the next step of appreciative inquiry: dream. It is important to not only identify what is working now but to also envision what success of the topic looks like in the future. This allows us to keep the end in mind.”
- **Explain**, “We are going to break up into groups and report back to the whole group in 8 minutes.

- **Ask**, “What are the possibilities that can happen within the element we chose to focus one? Five years from now, what does it look like to be successful?”
- **Instructions**
 - Break participants into small groups
 - Keep family members together
 - Make sure there is at least one staff in each group
 - Facilitator’s Note: You may choose to keep the same groups or form different ones to ensure shared leadership and voice.
- **Explain** that within their group, to select a note keeper and a speaker to share out.
- **Use** the handout provided to collect your answers.
- **Allow** 8 minutes for groups to work together before bringing them back to share. This may vary depending on the number of groups.
- **Ask** each a group to share what they discussed with the larger group. Make sure to thank them for their input and participation. We are not solving any problems at this time.

DESIGN: What Would Help the Goal Be Achieved?

- **Say** “We have heard what is working as well as what success looks like. With the end in mind, our next step of appreciative inquiry is to design what would help us get there.”
- **Explain** that we are going to break up into groups and report back to the whole group in 8 minutes.
- **Ask**, “How can we make these possibilities a reality? What have we done before that worked that we can do again? What would make the “dream” come alive?”
- **Instructions**
 - Break participants into small groups
 - Keep family members together
 - Make sure there is at least one staff in each group
 - Facilitator’s Note: You may choose to keep the same groups or form different ones to ensure shared leadership and voice.
- **Explain** that within their group, to select a note keeper and a speaker to share out.
- **Use** the handout provided to collect your answers.
- **Allow** 8 minutes for groups to work together before bringing them back to share. This may vary depending on the number of groups.
- **Ask** each a group to share what they discussed with the larger group. Make sure to thank them for their input and participation. We are not solving any problems at this time.

DESTINY: What Commitments Will Be Made?

- **Say** “We have heard what is working as well as what success looks like. With the end in mind, our next step of appreciative inquiry is to decide what commitments will help us get there.”
- **Explain** that we are going to break up into groups and report back to the whole group in 8 minutes.
- **Ask**, “How are we already doing this? What has been the most important thing we have learned? What commitments are we going to make?”
- **Instructions**
 - Break participants into small groups
 - Keep family members together
 - Make sure there is at least one staff in each group
 - **Facilitator’s Note:** You may choose to keep the same groups or form different ones to ensure shared leadership and voice.
- **Explain** that within their group, to select a note keeper and a speaker to share out.
- **Use** the handout provided to collect your answers.
- **Allow** 8 minutes for groups to work together before bringing them back to share. This may vary depending on the number of groups.
- **Ask** each a group to identify their top 2-3 commitments being suggested and share with the larger group. Make sure to thank them for their input and participation. We are not solving any problems at this time.

Wrap-up & Schedule Next Session

- **Reflection: Traffic Light**
 - **Ask** participants to share 1 thing they will start doing, one thing they will continue doing, and one thing they will stop doing in regards to the topic they selected.
 - **Make** sure to thank them for their input and participation. We are not solving any problems at this time.
- **Determine** next steps:
 - Session the date and location or the next session.
 - **Facilitator Note:** Preparing these dates as part of your annual calendar would be ideal to ensure preparedness.
 - Who is going to follow up with the participants to thank them for their participation
 - **Facilitator Note:** Always include contact information if there are questions or concerns in between sessions.
 - How actions taken and outcomes achieved is shared back to the group.

Family Survey

Use this tool as part of the membership process. Distribute it to all existing families and new families joining the Club. Develop a timeline to complete this survey in collaboration with National Youth Outcomes Initiative and trauma-informed assessments to measure impact and changes over time

This tool incorporates appreciative inquiry and 7 elements of a trauma-informed Club as a means for family feedback at your Club/Youth Center. Trauma-informed practice is an organizational development approach that involves trauma-informed principles across all aspects of your Club organization. Utilizing the results from this survey, along with scores from annual National Youth Outcomes Initiative should inform your organizations trauma-informed approach and assessments.

*NOTE: This survey should be translated into languages used by your families as appropriate to ensure inclusive feedback is provided.

New Member

Welcome to the [Club/Youth Center]! We are happy that you are here! Your experience matters to us. Please answer the following questions to the best of your ability to help us get to know you and how we can support you here. Thank you very much for taking this survey today! Your opinion is important to us, and we appreciate your time. Your answers will be anonymous, so please answer honestly.

1. What is one thing about your family you are most proud of?
2. What is one thing that makes your family happiest?
3. Where do you see your family in the next 12 months?
4. How can the Club/Youth Center support you towards your goal?
5. What is the most important thing you have learned about your family?
6. What makes your family feel most safe?
7. What do you expect from the Club/Youth Center?
8. On a scale of 1-10, 1 being not stressed and 10 being stressed all the time, how stressed do you feel:
 - a. At work: _____
 - b. At home: _____

9. Do you feel like you are treated fairly? Please circle yes or no.
 - a. At work: Yes or No
 - b. At home: Yes or No

10. What makes you feel most comfortable when working with others? Please circle all that apply.
 - a. Feeling supported
 - b. Not being judged
 - c. Being allowed to observe
 - d. Making sure everyone has equal roles
 - e. Feeling empowered
 - f. Other: _____

Returning/Existing Member

Welcome back to [Club/Youth Center]! Your experience matters to us. Please answer the following questions to the best of your ability to help us know how you are feeling and how we can support you more. Thank you very much for taking this survey today! Your opinion is important to us, and we appreciate your time. Your answers will be anonymous, so please answer honestly.

1. What is one thing about your family you are most proud of since joining the [Club/Youth Center]?
2. What is one thing that makes your family happiest while you are here?
3. Where do you see your family in the next 12 months?
4. How does the Club/Youth Center support you towards your goal?
5. What is the most important thing you have learned about your family since joining?
6. What makes you feel most safe at the Club/Youth Center?
7. What do you expect from the Club/Youth Center?
8. On a scale of 1-10, 1 being not stressed and 10 being stressed all the time, how stressed do you feel:
 - a. At work: _____
 - b. At home: _____
 - c. At Club/Youth Center: _____

9. Do you feel like you are treated fairly? Please circle yes or no.

- a. At work: Yes or No
- b. At home: Yes or No
- c. At Club/Youth Center: Yes or No

10. What makes you feel most comfortable when working with others? Please circle all that apply.

- a. Peer support
- b. Supportive Staff/Volunteers
- c. Not being judged
- d. Being allowed to observe
- e. Making sure everyone has equal roles
- f. Feeling empowered
- g. Other: _____

Youth Survey

(Ages 10+)

Use this tool as part of the membership process. Distribute it to all existing youth and new youth joining the Club. Develop a timeline to complete this survey in collaboration with National Youth Outcomes Initiative and trauma-informed assessments to measure impact and changes over time

This tool incorporates appreciative inquiry and 7 elements of a trauma-informed Club as a means for family feedback at your Club/Youth Center. Trauma-informed practice is an organizational development approach that involves trauma-informed principles across all aspects of your Club organization. Utilizing the results from this survey, along with scores from annual National Youth Outcomes Initiative should inform your organizations trauma-informed approach and assessments.

New Member

Welcome to the [Club/Youth Center]! We are happy that you are here! Your experience matters to us. Please answer the following questions to the best of your ability to help us get to know you and how we can support you here. Thank you very much for taking this survey today! Your opinion is important to us, and we appreciate your time. Your answers will be anonymous, so please answer honestly.

1. What is one thing about yourself you are most proud of?
2. What is one thing that makes you happiest?
3. Where do you see yourself in the next 12 months?
4. How can the Club/Youth Center support you towards your goal?
5. What is the most important thing you have learned about yourself?
6. What makes you feel most safe?
7. What do you expect from the Club/Youth Center?
8. On a scale of 1-10, 1 being not stressed and 10 being stressed all the time, how stressed do you feel:
 - a. At school: _____
 - b. At home: _____
9. Do you feel like you are treated fairly? Please circle yes or no.

- a. At school: Yes or No
 - b. At home: Yes or No
10. What makes you feel most comfortable when working with others? Please circle all that apply.
- a. Feeling supported
 - b. Not being judged
 - c. Being allowed to observe
 - d. Making sure everyone has equal roles
 - e. Feeling empowered
 - f. Other: _____

Returning/Existing Member

Welcome back to [Club/Youth Center]! Your experience matters to us. Please answer the following questions to the best of your ability to help us know how you are feeling and how we can support you more. Thank you very much for taking this survey today! Your opinion is important to us, and we appreciate your time. Your answers will be anonymous, so please answer honestly.

1. What is one thing about yourself you are most proud of since joining the [Club/Youth Center]?
2. What is one thing that makes you happiest while you are here?
3. Where do you see yourself in the next 12 months?
4. How does the Club/Youth Center support you towards your goal?
5. What is the most important thing you have learned about yourself since joining?
6. What makes you feel most safe at the Club/Youth Center?
7. What do you expect from the Club/Youth Center?
8. On a scale of 1-10, 1 being not stressed and 10 being stressed all the time, how stressed do you feel:
 - a. At school: _____
 - b. At home: _____
 - c. At Club/Youth Center: _____
9. Do you feel like you are treated fairly? Please circle yes or no.

- a. At school: Yes or No
 - b. At home: Yes or No
 - c. At Club/Youth Center: Yes or No
10. What makes you feel most comfortable when working with others? Please circle all that apply.
- a. Peer support
 - b. Supportive Staff/Volunteers
 - c. Not being judged
 - d. Being allowed to observe
 - e. Making sure everyone has equal roles
 - f. Feeling empowered
 - g. Other: _____