



Families First: The Great First Eight Curriculum Family Engagement Approach Infants & Toddlers

In Great First Eight, we recognize that families are children's first and most enduring teachers. We help teachers learn from families. We provide opportunities for families to learn from one another. And we share with families ways they can support children's curriculum-related learning at home.

In Great First Eight Infant & Toddler classrooms, teachers and families have many opportunities to learn with and from each other, including:

- ✓ Talking at pick-up and drop-off
- ✓ Weekly messages about what children are learning and how to help
- ✓ Newsletters showing what children have been doing and learning in the classroom
- ✓ Share With Us questions to prompt conversation among families and teachers
- ✓ School/community events celebrating children's learning
- ✓ Opportunities to volunteer

Our family engagement approach also includes:



Beyond the Walls Visits: Individual visits in which teachers and families meet to get to know each other and set goals for the child's learning

Project Overviews for Families: A handout describing what children will do and learn throughout the monthly unit (Infant Exploration or Toddler Project), and the different ways families can be involved

All About Me books: A book all about your child—who they are, what they do, and how they learn and grow—that teachers, families, and children contribute to throughout the year

Family Studios: Get-togethers in which families learn with one another and the teacher about ways they can support children's learning through everyday activities at home

Great First Eight's approach goes beyond traditional "parent involvement":

- We include many family members, not just parents
- Educators learn from and with families to support children at home and at school
- The goals and cultures of families and the community are honored