



Introduction

Parents as Teachers is an evidence-based early childhood home visiting model which is designed to ensure that young children are healthy, safe, and ready to learn. Parent educators work with families through four service delivery components: personal visits, group connections¹, screening and resource network. All families receive the four components of the model.

The Parents as Teachers model has four primary goals:

- Increase parent knowledge of early childhood development and improve parenting practices
- Provide early detection of developmental delays and health issues
- Prevent child abuse and neglect
- Increase children's school readiness and school success

In order to become familiar with the expectations for replication of the model, you will need to carefully review the following Quality Assurance Guidelines. They were developed by the Parents as Teachers national office to provide clear requirements and guidance for replication of the Parents as Teachers model.

If your organization already provides home visiting services to families of young children, you may be choosing Parents as Teachers training and curriculum to enhance the child development and parenting focus of your home visitors and maximize consistency of service delivery in order to best achieve outcomes. As a result, you are likely well positioned to incorporate the Parents as Teachers model. Nonetheless, it is still important that you closely review these Quality Assurance Guidelines and ensure that your organization is either already meeting the requirements or will be putting mechanisms into place to meet the requirements as you move forward with implementing the Parents as Teachers model. If you are establishing a new home visiting program, you will need to use the Quality Assurance Guidelines to guide you as you build your program. In both cases, it is important to consider that home visiting services are part of a continuum of supports for families of young children and that strong communities provide multiple coordinated and well-integrated avenues for the optimal development of young children.

Model fidelity and quality provide the foundation for demonstrating outcomes for children and families. The guidelines and essential requirements described in this document represent the programmatic elements necessary for model fidelity and should be used to guide the development and growth of a Parents as Teachers affiliate and the completion of an Affiliate Plan. The 2011 Essential Requirements for model replication are described throughout this document and summarized in the table beginning on p. 17. An approved Affiliate Plan is required for new affiliates prior to registering individuals for the Model Implementation Training.

After completing and receiving approval for the Affiliate Plan, all new parent educators in an organization who will deliver Parents as Teachers services to families must attend the Foundational and Model Implementation trainings before delivering Parents as Teachers. New supervisors must attend the Model Implementation Training. Plans may be approved by the national office or appropriate state office.

¹ Previously referred to as "group meetings"

Parent educators certified prior to January 1, 2011, who are with an existing program must attend Foundational Training and a model implementation retraining by July, 2014. Supervisors with an existing program must attend a model implementation retraining by July, 2014. New parent educators hired by an existing program (affiliated prior to January 1, 2011) must attend the Foundational and Model Implementation Trainings before delivering Parents as Teachers, while new supervisors must attend Model Implementation Training.

Staffing, Supervision, and Professional Development

Choosing the Right Parent Educators

Affiliate quality is highly dependent on hiring parent educators who value working with parents of young children and who have the skills and commitment to develop positive and enduring relationships with families. Parent educators use the Parents as Teachers curriculum with families at each visit, ensuring that families receive consistent research-based, evidence-informed information and that parents are empowered to utilize the information to create safe and nurturing environments for their children. The Foundational and Model Implementation trainings provide comprehensive training on how to work with families and use the curriculum to effectively meet the needs of all families served.

When hiring a parent educator for your program, a combination of education, work experience and effective communication and interpersonal skills is critical. An important factor in successful hiring is the supervisor’s familiarity with the core competencies that parent educators must develop.

The core competencies are divided into 5 core areas. Within each competency area are the knowledge, skills, and practices that parent educators need to develop over time through training and experience.

Competency Area		Definition and Description
I.	Family Support and Parenting Education	Parent educators practice a strength-based family support and parenting education approach to support the growth of parents’ capacities through research-based methods and principles.
II.	Child and Family Development	Parent educators are knowledgeable about child and parent development, and are skilled in fostering positive parent-child interactions.
III.	Human Diversity within Family Systems	Parent educators demonstrate respect for diverse needs and characteristics of families and understand the influence of varied family systems, culture, and socioeconomic status in child rearing practices and school readiness.
IV.	Health, Safety, and Nutrition	Parent educators assist parents in establishing healthy and safe environments and parenting practices that promote the optimal development of children.
V.	Relationships between Families and Communities	Parent educators strengthen families by building partnerships, connecting parents to supports, and fostering parent engagement and leadership in schools and other community organizations.

Priority should be given to hiring parent educators with effective communication and interpersonal skills (e.g., outgoing, empathic, non-judgmental, patient, tactful) since these skills are necessary building blocks for each core competency area listed above. In addition, parent educators should be committed to continual growth in their ability to respond effectively to families’ community, cultural, and language backgrounds.

To gain a sense of communication and interpersonal skills, it can be helpful to pose specific questions during the personal interview that are relevant to a parent educator's job. For example, "what would you do if an 18 month old toddler threw a temper tantrum during the visit?" or "How would you feel if the home you visited had bugs?" Listen for answers that reflect a positive, nonjudgmental, respectful attitude toward all families. Give examples of scenarios as realistic to the job as possible so the prospective parent educators can truly get a sense of what the job entails.

Keep in mind during an interview that the behavior demonstrated by the candidate is indicative of how he or she will behave with parents. Candidates who fumble for words, act awkwardly, avoid eye contact, give inappropriate answers or do not actively listen may not be the best candidates for the parent educator position. Always check references.

We recommend that parent educators have at least a bachelor's or four-year degree in early childhood or a related field. However, it is also acceptable for parent educators to have a two-year degree or 60 college hours in early childhood or a related field. Supervised experience working with young children and/or parents is also recommended.

It is essential that the education and experience level for parent educators is at least a high school diploma or GED and a minimum of two years' previous supervised work experience with young children and/or parents. Individual programs may require additional educational or work history requirements that they find appropriate.

Supervision

The Parents as Teachers supervisor directs, coordinates, supports, and evaluates the on-the-job performance of parent educators. A combination of education, work experience and effective interpersonal and communication skills is critical for the supervisor as well.

For the supervisor, a college degree or beyond in early childhood education, elementary education, behavioral or social sciences or a related field is recommended. He or she must also successfully complete the Model Implementation Training. In addition, the supervisor should have demonstrated ability to work with adults and young children.

For supervision purposes, a mentor or lead parent educator can be designated to support and provide guidance for parent educators. This approach is most applicable to an affiliate with many parent educators.

It is essential that a maximum of 12 parent educators be assigned to each supervisor or mentor or lead parent educator regardless of whether the parent educators being supervised are full-time or part-time employees. The maximum number of supervisees is based on a full time supervisor/mentor/lead parent educator and should be less if the supervisor/mentor/lead parent educator is not full time. This maximum ratio of supervisees to supervisor/mentor/lead parent educator is designed to allow sufficient time for formal and informal supervision of parent educators, as well as for the supervisor's program management and operations responsibilities.

It is essential that each month, parent educators participate in a minimum of two hours of individual reflective supervision and a minimum of two hours of staff meetings.

In addition to covering necessary administrative issues, individual supervision should be reflective. Rebecca Parlakian (2001) has identified the “building blocks of reflective supervision” as reflection, collaboration, and regularity:

Through reflection, we can examine our thoughts and feelings about the experience and identify the interventions that best meet the family’s goals for self-sufficiency, growth and development...
Collaboration [allows] for a dialogue to occur on issues affecting the staff person and the program...
[And finally,] neither reflection nor collaboration will occur without regularity of interactions (Parlakian, 2001, pp. 2-3).

Topics that should be covered within the context of reflective supervision include, but are not limited to:

- parent educators’ reflections on their work with families
- relationship building with parents and children through personal visits and group connections
- screening, re-screening and recommendations based on screening outcomes
- understanding development and successful use of community resource linkages
- program and working conditions
- administrative issues, including record keeping

As long as a monthly staff meeting is provided to each parent educator, staff meetings can be done in subgroups. For example an affiliate may have staff that provide visits during the daytime and staff that provide evening and weekend visits. In this example, the supervisor might convene a monthly staff meeting of its daytime parent educators and a monthly staff meeting of its evening and weekend parent educators.

Professional Development

Ongoing professional development enhances the knowledge base that informs parent educators’ work and increases their competence in delivering services to children and families. The supervisor works with each parent educator to help them develop a professional growth plan using the core competencies as a framework. On an annual basis, parent educators and their supervisors should re-assess a parent educator’s competencies across the five core areas and use this assessment to develop written professional development goals. Specific training opportunities or professional growth opportunities can be identified to meet these goals.

It is essential that parent educators access competency-based professional development and training and recertify with the national office annually. For parent educators:

- Year 1: 20 clock hours of professional development
- Year 2: 15 clock hours of professional development
- Year 3 and beyond: 10 clock hours of professional development

Specifically, in order to continue to serve families using the Parents as Teachers model, parent educators must:

- Maintain records that contribute to the annual Affiliate Performance Report. The supervisor must submit the Affiliate Performance Report, along with recertification forms, per the requested deadline in order for parent educators and supervisors to be recertified and receive online access to curriculum resources.
- Earn competency-based professional development hours relating to the five Parents as Teachers core competency areas: Family Support and Parenting Education; Child and Family Development; Human Diversity within Family Systems; Health, Safety, and Nutrition; Relationships between Families and Communities.

The professional development hours may be obtained through:

- Parents as Teachers trainings and professional development opportunities
- Undergraduate or graduate courses by accredited community colleges, colleges or universities
- Continuing education or professional development conferences
- Workshops or seminars sponsored by your organization or other organizations in the community
- Online training provided by credible organizations

Funding Source and Funding Duration

Funding for a Parents as Teachers affiliate can come from a variety of sources, including federal, state, local and private. Your program may be receiving all types or some combination of one or more.

While it is preferable for your program to come in with three or more years of funding in place, ***a minimum of two years' funding is essential for major sources of funding.***

Parents as Teachers recognizes that many funding sources must be renewed annually. This is acceptable for the essential funding requirement and distinguished from a funding source that is designed for one year only. An Excel budgeting tool can be found at <http://www.parentsasteachers.org/training/training-gateway>.

Duration of Services

For greatest impact, most Parents as Teachers affiliates provide three plus years of service. ***It is essential that Parents as Teachers affiliates provide at least two years of services to families between prenatal and kindergarten entry.*** Duration of services refers to the affiliate's overall design. Thus, as long as your affiliate is designed to provide at least two years of service, families can enroll when their child is any age within the affiliate's overall age range- although optimal impact is likely when enrolled prenatally or shortly after birth. Parent educators should strive to enroll the maximum number of families prenatally, or shortly after the baby's birth.

Affiliates that provide the minimum two years of services to families typically deliver an increased frequency of services during this period.

It is optimal for affiliates to operate year round so that families' needs are consistently met and so that families are enrolled in and receive services as quickly as possible. ***It is essential that programs operate all 12 months of the year.*** It is understood that a Parents as Teachers affiliate based in a school district may be limited to 10 months of full operation. In order to maintain needed services, Parents as Teachers affiliates based in school districts should provide personal visits to a portion of families year round, prioritizing visits to pregnant women and their partners, new parents of infants and vulnerable families. In addition, it is incumbent upon the school district based Parents as Teachers affiliate to ensure that its families are well connected to needed community services that operate year round.

Populations to be Served

Age of Children

The Parents as Teachers model is designed to serve families throughout pregnancy until their child(ren) enter kindergarten. Your organization can choose to focus services primarily on families with children Prenatal to 3 or primarily Prenatal to Kindergarten entry.

Affiliates may also choose to extend their Parents as Teachers services to families with children ages 3 years to the age of kindergarten entry by having their parent educators attend the Parents as Teachers, 3 Years to Kindergarten Entry Training. This training is available only to parent educators who have attended the foundational training.

Target Population

Some affiliates target services to a specific community or geographic location. Communities may be identified as particularly in need of home visiting because of demographic data (e.g., levels of infant mortality, poverty, or low educational attainment). The type of community – major city, small town, urban, rural, or suburban – and associated characteristics, such as geographic isolation or lack of accessible resources, will also influence the development of your affiliate, particularly as you determine appropriate recruitment strategies, budget for travel costs, and determine your community partners and key resources for families.

Eligibility Criteria

In addition, some affiliates have specific eligibility criteria for the families who receive services. Such eligibility criteria might include children with special needs, families at risk for child abuse, income-based criteria, teen parents, first time parents, immigrant families, low literate families, or parents with mental health or substance abuse issues. The Parents as Teachers model is adaptable to varied target populations and communities and affiliates typically serve families with a range of risk and protective factors. Because the Parents as Teachers program is designed to promote positive parenting and optimal child development for families from a range of backgrounds, the national office encourages communities to offer Parents as Teachers services to as many families as possible in their catchment area.

Recruitment and Retention of Families

Each Parents as Teachers affiliate promotes its services in the community, recruits and serves the maximum number of eligible families and facilitates families' ongoing participation in services. Recruitment and retention efforts are integral for the success of any Parents as Teachers affiliate.

Recruitment Settings

New Parents as Teachers affiliates need to actively recruit families. Recruitment in a variety of settings is highly recommended. Such settings include:

- Hospitals/health clinics/doctors' offices
- Organizations providing diagnostic and early intervention services
- Social services organizations
- Schools
- Mental health agencies
- Other early childhood programs
- Community resources such as libraries and job training centers
- Faith based organizations

Recruitment Methods and Strategies

A variety of recruitment methods is often needed to reach the maximum number of eligible families. Possible recruitment methods include:

- print materials
- personal contact by parent educators
- informal meetings
- website, radio or TV
- signage (lawn signs, billboards, etc.)

- family recruitment events
- hosting booths at family oriented events

Depending on your community and your collaborations with existing agencies, you may also identify other effective methods.

Retention and Engagement Strategies

Once families are enrolled in Parents as Teachers, parent educators must facilitate families' continued participation in services through a variety of strategies. Some affiliates send written visit reminders (e.g, postcards), email/text message visit reminders, leave stickers to place on the calendar as a reminder, or leave door hangers or notes when a family misses a visit. In addition, affiliates may choose to have parent educators provide a book or other incentive at each visit. To encourage participation at group connections, it may be beneficial to offer incentives, food, or transportation. Make sure your budget includes adequate staff time and funding for these activities. Ultimately, it is the relationship between the families and parent educators that most impacts retention.

Assessment and Goal Setting

Family-Centered Assessment

In Parents as Teachers, family-centered assessment is a mechanism to get to know and genuinely understand the family, to recognize factors that promote family resilience and well-being, and to facilitate goal setting with the family. "Assessment forms the foundation of effective practice with children and families. Family-centered assessment focuses on the whole family, values family participation and experience, and respects the family's culture and ethnicity," ("Family Centered Assessment", n.d., para 1).

In the Model Implementation Guide, we recommend a family-centered assessment tool- the Life Skills Progression- that your affiliate may wish to use. The manual *Life Skills Progression: An Outcome and Intervention Planning Instrument for Use with Families at Risk* by Linda Wollesen and Karen Peifer can be purchased at www.brookespublishing.com/store/books/wollesen-8302. However, Parents as Teachers recognizes that your organization and/or funding source may require that you use a specific family assessment tool.

Regardless of the particular tool that your affiliate chooses, **it is essential that parent educators complete and document a family-centered assessment and family-centered goals with each family they serve.** Parent educators use the assessment and family goals to plan and deliver services, as well as to assess progress. Assessment and goal setting are implemented upon enrollment and revisited throughout the time each family is with Parents as Teachers. Ultimately, family-centered assessment and goal setting inform and drive the Parents as Teachers services provided to each family.

Family-Centered Goal Setting

Family-centered assessment is a fundamental building block for goal setting with families. Goal setting with families receiving Parents as Teachers services focuses on:

- nurturing positive parenting behavior,
- promoting healthy child development and school readiness, and
- supporting parent and family well being, including maternal health, economic self-sufficiency and a safe and stable home environment

Referrals to and coordination with other community resources and supports will be necessary in order to achieve the goals set by families through Parents as Teachers services.

Model Component: Personal Visits

It is essential that at each visit, parent educators focus their work with families on parent-child interaction, development-centered parenting, and family well-being, ensuring that all areas are addressed with families. The amount of time spent in each visit on each area of emphasis will vary based on family needs and goals.

Where do visits take place?

Personal visits are conducted in the home to build on the primary learning environment of the family. When extenuating circumstances exist, personal visits can be delivered in a mutually agreed upon site outside the home. For example, visits with teen parents often take place at the school, visits for Parents as Teachers in the Child Care Center typically take place in the center, visits may take place at a safe location for families dealing with domestic violence issues or visits might take place in a hospital when a child is in the NICU.

How often do visits take place?

There is broad consensus in the literature and research on early childhood home visiting that intensity of service is a key factor in achieving outcomes.

It is essential that families receive at least 10-12 (monthly) visits annually spread out over the course of a year. At least 20-24 (twice monthly) personal visits must be completed for families with greater needs, also spread out over the course of a year. In some cases, visit frequency may be gradually decreased as the family transitions out and into other services.

How many visits does a parent educator complete each month?

It is essential that experienced full time parent educators complete no more than 60 visits per month. New parent educators will require additional time for supervision, as well as for planning, preparation and documentation of a personal visit; this translates into no more than 48 visits per month during the first year. We recommend allocating an extra half hour per personal visit to provide additional time for supervision, planning and recordkeeping for new parent educators in their first two years.

Please note that the term “full-time” is based upon 40 hours of employment weekly. Parent educators should complete visits proportional to the percent of their employment.

The maximum for experienced parent educator monthly visit completion is based on several factors:

- Time allocation for personal visits: approximately 1 hour for the delivery of each personal visit, along with another hour for visit planning and preparation, travel and documentation of the visit. If travel time is significantly greater, the number of visits the parent educator can complete monthly will decrease. In addition, if the parent educator is visiting a family with more than one enrolled child, visiting time will be approximately 75 minutes and the total number of visits the parent educator can complete monthly will decrease.
- Time allocation for responsibilities related to effective and high quality early childhood home visitation services: implementation of retention strategies, dedicated time for making up cancelled and missed visits, resource network facilitation and follow up, along with participation in supervision sessions and staff meetings.

- Time allocation for group connections responsibilities: Parent educators in many affiliates plan and facilitate group connections. Therefore, time must be allocated for these responsibilities. If an affiliate dedicates parent educators' time to personal visits only and employs other staff that are responsible for planning and facilitating group connections, then a parent educator may be able to complete additional visits weekly.
- Time allocation for recruitment activities: While some organizations designate specific staff whose full or partial responsibilities focus on recruiting families for services, many affiliates incorporate recruitment responsibilities into the overall responsibilities of a parent educator. Thus, time must be allocated for recruitment activities.

How many families should a parent educator serve?

The maximum number of families on a parent educator's caseload is determined by the visit frequency and number of visits to be completed monthly.

Model Component: Group Connections

Group connections are designed so that families build social connections with each other, engage in parent-child interaction, and increase their knowledge of ways to support children's development.

To qualify as a group connection, ***it is essential that a certified parent educator or the Parents as Teachers supervisor be present at each group connection.*** In addition, each group connection focuses on one or more of the following:

- Parent-child interaction
- Development-centered parenting
- Family well-being

Across the program year, your affiliate should address these topics through a variety of group connection formats, including family activities, ongoing groups, presentation, and community events. In total, the group connections a Parents as Teachers affiliate offers annually should incorporate all age groups of children served by the affiliate and all areas of child development.

The more community and family relationships a family has, the less isolated they feel. Thus, an important aspect of Parents as Teachers group connections is to encourage parents to build support networks by talking with each other about common experiences and concerns. Some programs may find it beneficial to offer peer-facilitated group connections. Group connections can also be a form of recruitment for "service-shy" families.

How often do group connections take place?

It is essential that affiliates deliver monthly group connections focused on parent-child interaction, development-centered parenting, and family well-being across the program year.

For some affiliates in which transportation is a challenge, such as rural areas, it requires creativity and flexibility to offer monthly group connections. Nonetheless, it can be done successfully. One consideration is that group connections do not have to be site based, particularly if transportation is a challenge. A parent educator could convene a group meeting at a location more central to multiple families. In addition to monthly group connections, your affiliate might want to consider using online social networking approaches to share child development and parenting information, build support between parents, and encourage affiliate participation.

Model Component: Screening

Screening provides regular information about each child’s health and developmental progress, increases parents’ understanding of their child’s development, and identifies strengths and abilities, as well as areas of concern.

The screening component of the Parents as Teachers model specifically refers to the following four areas:

Hearing	Early identification of hearing impairment can have a profound impact upon a child’s development. Your affiliate should ensure that children are screened using either otoacoustic emissions (OAE) or pure tone audiometry ² . These hearing screenings are the most accurate ways to identify hearing impairment. Additional training applies to these methods. See Appendix A for a list of otoacoustic emissions and audiometry instruments, and approximate costs.
Vision	Researchers have shown that the most sensitive period for the development of vision occurs between birth and age two. At least annually, parent educators provide functional vision screens, observing the muscle movement of the eyes and whether both eyes are working together to help ensure that vision problems in children do not go unnoticed and untreated. Brief training in vision screening is provided during the Model Implementation Training. See Appendix A for a list of supplemental vision screening tools and approximate costs.
Health	A primary goal of any early childhood program must be to support the healthy growth and development of all children. To this end, while parent educators do not perform medical screenings, they do gather and maintain information on each enrolled child’s health status. This is done by completing a health record for each child using either the Parents as Teachers health record from the curriculum or a similar comprehensive health record. This information is updated each year, allowing the parent educator to confirm that children are receiving medical care and immunizations.
Developmental	Developmental screening includes screening in the areas of language, intellectual, social-emotional, and motor development through the use of instruments approved by Parents as Teachers (see http://www.parentsasteachers.org/training/training-gateway for a list of approved screening tools). Regular review of each child’s developmental progress identifies strengths as well as areas of concern that may require referral for follow-up services. Additional training, following the Foundational and Model Implementation trainings, is necessary to administer the screening instrument that your affiliate chooses.
Social-Emotional/ Mental Health (supplemental)	Many affiliates also choose to conduct supplemental social-emotional/mental health screenings with the infants and young children they serve. Affiliates that plan to do these screenings will need to select a tool that specifically screens for such issues.

Screening is both a formal event and an ongoing process. ***It is essential that formal screening (hearing, vision, developmental, and the health record) be completed at least annually for all age eligible children. The initial screening must take place within 90 days of enrollment for each child.*** If an element of the screening has recently been completed and it is counter-indicated to repeat it, the results must be obtained and used to have a complete picture of the child.

² Audiometry is only suitable for children 30 months of age and older. Hearing screening using otoacoustic emissions is required for meeting the essential requirement for hearing screening for children younger than this.

For particular areas of concern identified through screening, parent educators make specific recommendations for follow-up activities to support the child's development and, if indicated, a referral for further assessment. When a recommendation is made for further assessment, parent educators support families in following through on the recommendation.

Typically, parent educators perform screenings during personal visits with families. As an alternative, an affiliate may have other trained personnel or agencies conduct the screenings. If your affiliate will contract out or outsource any screening services, you will need to develop a written agreement outlining the contracted services along with how screening results will be communicated to your affiliate and to parents.

Model Component: Resource Network

The Parents as Teachers affiliate connects families to needed resources and takes an active role in the community, establishing ongoing relationships with other institutions and organizations that serve families.

In every community, there is an array of programs designed to nurture and help families. Parents as Teachers is not intended to be the only service a family will need. However, Parents as Teachers' child development focused approach to family support makes it a valuable part of the community's network of human services programs. When these organizations, agencies, coalitions, government-supported programs, schools and faith based communities connect with each other, they provide a powerful network of support for families. To be most effective, all parent educators and their supervisors must have good knowledge, and be an active part, of this resource network.

Your affiliate will need to equip parent educators with knowledge about varied organizations and agencies in your community that families may need to access (you will identify the top 5 in your Affiliate Plan). Parent educators should be familiar with community health, mental health, education and social service organizations, as well as the names of individuals in those organizations who can assist families. It is also important for your affiliate to have in place working agreements with community agencies that explicitly address how you will connect families to the agencies' resources.

It is essential that at each personal visit, parent educators connect families to resources as needed and then help them to overcome barriers to access. Parent educators' active collaboration with community resources complement and extend Parents as Teachers services. A parent educator's role is to help provide the bridge between families and needed resources, not merely to refer them to services.

Additional Services Provided to Families

Many organizations offer multiple services to Parents as Teachers families. It is expected that additional services will be provided to your affiliate's more vulnerable families. For example, in addition to the four component Parents as Teachers model, an organization might provide case management or family literacy services to all or a subset of their Parents as Teachers families. Further, as noted in the introduction, some organizations incorporate or blend Parents as Teachers with another early childhood home visitation model or family support program such as Early Head Start, Healthy Families America or Even Start. Adding Parents as Teachers to existing services in your organization can greatly strengthen your impact on children and families.

Advisory Committee

It is essential that the Parents as Teachers affiliate have an advisory committee which typically includes program personnel, community service providers, community leaders, families, and other stakeholders. **The advisory committee must meet at least every 6 months**, although the preferred frequency is quarterly or more frequently.

The Parents as Teachers advisory committee has several key functions, most notably to advise, provide support for, promote, and offer input to the Parents as Teachers affiliate. Specifically, the advisory committee:

- Provides support for the development and promotion of the Parents as Teachers affiliate.
- Helps identify existing and potential funding sources.
- Provides input into program planning and evaluation.

The advisory committee can have a broader scope than Parents as Teachers but must include a focus on Parents as Teachers in its meetings and its work.

It is important to recognize that the Parents as Teachers advisory committee is different from an organization's governing board or board of trustees (Merrill Associates, 2003, para 1). A volunteer advisory group, board, committee, or council is typically formed to give advice and counsel related to the operation of the organization and/or the planning of events and activities for programming, and contributes without legal authority (Macduff, 1998, & Merrill, 2003, as cited in Edwards, 2008, p.4).

Establishing the committee

Before recruiting committee members, an affiliate should consider the different representatives to be included. Consider groups and organizations who are currently important stakeholders in your organization, as well as potentially valuable new resources. In addition, committee members should reflect the geographic regions and demographics of the population that your organization serves.

Committee procedures and operating guidelines

The Parents as Teachers affiliate should develop advisory committee procedures and operating guidelines that cover the following topics and issues:

- The purpose of the advisory committee
- Committee member job descriptions
- Size, structure and makeup of the committee
- How long each member serves
- Frequency and duration of meetings
- Officers and related duties (as applicable)
- Relationship of the committee to staff and the governing board

Documentation of Services

Each Parents as Teachers affiliate needs to maintain an efficient and comprehensive system of service documentation and data collection. Clear, organized and easily retrievable information is key to quality service delivery and best practices, as well as being essential to accountability. Data needed for annual reports, research, and tracking families' success toward accomplishing child development and parenting goals will be found in the documentation parent educators and supervisors maintain as part of their daily work.

What information is essential to record?

- Enrollment information
- Assessment information
- Goal setting information
- Information about service delivery, including:
 - personal visits,
 - group connections,
 - screenings and
 - resource/referral connections
- Child health information
- Exit/transition information

It is important to collect and record sufficient information about the above areas so that documentation presents a comprehensive picture of the family and the services being provided. The following table provides guidance on essential data points to record in each area:

Enrollment	<p>Initial contacts (including dates of contact, who initiated contact, and date assigned to parent educator)</p> <p>Enrollment Date (defined as date of first completed visit)</p> <p>Reason for joining program, including referral source, if applicable</p> <p>Eligibility for services (geographic area or other family factors)</p> <p>Child and family contact info</p> <p>Family demographic info</p> <p>Additional child info (e.g. pregnancy and birth info, current medical conditions, healthcare provider, etc)</p> <p>Additional family characteristics and information (e.g. high-needs factors)</p>
Waiting list	<p>Names and contact information of interested participants who cannot be served right away</p> <p>Date participant(s) first contacted or were contacted by the program (whoever made the first contact)</p> <p>If participant made first contact, date the program responded</p> <p>Date interested participant was placed on waiting list</p> <p>Date interested participant was taken off waiting list and assigned to a parent educator</p>
Assessment	<p>Data will vary based on the assessment tool used, but overall information should include:</p> <p>Identifying and demographic information for parent(s) and children</p> <p>Type of assessment (initial, repeat, closing)</p> <p>Relationships with family, spouse and friends, children and supportive or community resources</p> <p>Education, employment, income level</p> <p>Health and medical care, mental health and substance use/abuse</p> <p>Basic essentials and needs</p> <p>Child development</p>
Goal setting	<p>Goals</p> <p>Timeline</p> <p>Action steps</p> <p>Resources needed</p> <p>Review and progress</p>

Contact history	Completed visits, group connections and screenings Appointments not completed (e.g. cancelled, by whom, no-shows, etc.)
Personal visits	Identifying information (family members' and child(ren)'s names, others present, date of birth, etc.) Visit statistics (date, location, start and stop times, check-in completed) Parent-child interaction (parent/child activity pages used, observations of parenting behavior and child behavior and development) Developmental milestones updated Developmental topics (identify topics and associated key points or strategies for each child in the visit) Family well-being topics addressed Linkages to resources (referrals and linkages to needed resources and barriers to access) Protective factors addressed Comments Screening conducted (if applicable) Handouts given? Outcomes tool used? Next visit scheduled? Family goals progress and changes Parent educator action steps, comments, or reminders
Group connections	Planning data (including meeting title, date, time, location, format, topic, ages of children focused on, childcare provisions, facilitators, key resources, and planned activities/discussion points , to be updated upon meeting completion with applicable implementation information) Attendance data Participant feedback
Screening <i>Hearing, vision, and developmental screening should occur within 90 days of enrollment and annually thereafter</i>	Identifying information (child and guardian names, child's date of birth) Basic screening information (screening date, age at screening, screener name, screening instrument) Screening findings and scores in each domain according to the instrument used Delays identified Follow up activities and comments Referrals Date follow up completed (if applicable) Additional comments (including available info regarding general health status)
Resource or referral connections	Referral date and type Referral made by and made to Referral reason Referral follow up date Family received services (yes, no, unknown) Comments and feedback on resources
Health information <i>to be completed within 90 days of enrollment and updated at least annually</i>	Health history (including general info about child's medical history, medications and check-ups) Medical concerns General development (e.g. child strengths, challenges, parental concerns) Sleep habits Immunization history Dental health Hearing and vision screening info (see above) Safety precautions implemented (e.g. car seat use)

<p>Exit or transition information to be completed within 30 days of program exit</p>	<p>Family and child information, including names, enrollment date and age at exit Exit date and reason for exit Summary of contacts and services family was offered and received (visits, group connections, referrals) Screenings provided, results, follow up and referrals accessed Status of age-appropriate child development in each domain at time of exit. Status of immunizations Outcomes and goals achieved (e.g. family goals, parent knowledge change and other measures) Transition plan</p>
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Computerized recordkeeping is the preferred method for documentation of services and data tracking. With computerized recordkeeping, information is entered via the computer, rather than written on paper. In particular, Visit Tracker, www.visittrackerweb.com, is the Parents as Teachers approved web-based recordkeeping and service delivery tracking system (cost information provided in the Excel budgeting tool.) By using Visit Tracker, you can be assured that your affiliate is collecting and documenting the necessary data regarding families and service delivery. Affiliates incorporating Parents as Teachers into existing services may have existing data management systems that will work effectively for their affiliate as well.

Evaluation

Affiliates must plan for evaluation of Parents as Teachers model implementation and outcomes. ***It is essential that your affiliate collect and annually report data on service delivery, model implementation, and compliance with the model replication requirements through the Affiliate Performance Report.*** Use of a management information system is the preferred method for data collection (as noted above).

It is essential that affiliates gather and summarize annual parent satisfaction surveys and solicit regular feedback from parents about all model components.

The national office provides guidelines and requirements for model fidelity and quality that establish a comprehensive blueprint for quality implementation of Parents as Teachers. Affiliates will annually report data on service delivery, program implementation, and compliance with the model replication requirements through the Affiliate Performance Report³, a web-based reporting system.⁴ Timely reporting requires that the Affiliate Performance Report be completed by July 15, but no later than July 31. Therefore, we recommend (but do not require) that affiliates define a program year as July 1- June 30. The system is open for data entry beginning May 1 of each year.

In summary, evaluation of Parents as Teachers implementation includes:

1. Collection of essential data (see the Essential Data Points table above). Data are tracked and summarized annually. These data are submitted to the national office annually using the Affiliate Performance Report.
2. Timely and accurate submission of Affiliate Performance Report data, including reporting of compliance with the essential requirements, to the national office.
3. Regular collection of participant satisfaction feedback through annual parent satisfaction surveys and regular and ongoing collection of feedback from parents about all model components.

³ Previously referred to as the “Annual Program Report”

⁴ New affiliates with parent educators trained before May 1st must complete the Affiliate Performance Report that year.

4. Regular program self-assessment, with initial focus on compliance with the essential requirements outlined in the table below. Note: The existing Parents as Teachers quality standards and accompanying self-assessment guidelines will be revised as of July, 2011 so that they are more clearly aligned with the essential requirements and new data reporting expectations.

Your affiliate should also collect outcome data on participants. Within the Parents as Teachers Model Implementation Guide, we provide a parent survey and group connections feedback form. These tools, along with a parent satisfaction survey available online are tied to key outcomes of our model. Additional outcome measures, such as observational parenting assessments or measures of child school readiness, are often used by programs to measure outcomes in a particular domain. At this time the national office does not have a required outcome tool that affiliates must use, acknowledging that funding sources often dictate the specific measures used. Your grant or funder may also require particular outcome indicators to be tracked over time using administrative data, such as number of children with a medical home or number of hospitalizations or emergency room visits. Outcomes measurement choices should be consistent with the Parents as Teachers logic model and any additional services that your organization provides.

2011 Essential Requirements for Model Replication

The 2011 essential requirements represent programmatic elements necessary for model fidelity. Beginning in January 2011, the following essential requirements⁵ must be in place prior to becoming a new Parents as Teachers affiliate. Existing affiliates with initial affiliation dates prior to January 1, 2011 will be expected to comply with the essential requirements by July 2014 in order to maintain their Parents as Teachers affiliation.

Compliance with the requirements established in this document signifies that the Parents as Teachers affiliate can remain an affiliate with approval to implement the Parents as Teachers model.

Areas	Essential Requirements <i>(the specific requirements are italicized)</i>
Parent Educator Educational Background and Experience	We recommend that parent educators have at least a bachelor's or four-year degree in early childhood or a related field. However, it is also acceptable for parent educators to have a two-year degree or 60 college hours in early childhood or a related field. Supervised experience working with young children and/or parents is also recommended. <i>It is essential that the education and experience level for parent educators is at least a high school diploma or GED and a minimum of two years' previous supervised work experience with young children and/or parents.</i>
Duration of services	For greatest impact, most Parents as Teachers affiliates provide three plus years of service. <i>It is essential that Parents as Teachers affiliates provide at least two years of services to families between prenatal and kindergarten entry.</i> Duration of services refers to the program's overall design. Thus, as long as your program is designed to provide at least 2 years of service, families can enroll when their child is any age within the program's overall age range- although optimal impact is likely when enrolled prenatally or shortly after birth. Parent educators should strive to enroll the maximum number of families prenatally, or shortly after birth.
	<i>It is essential that programs operate all 12 months of the year.</i> It is understood that Parents as Teachers affiliates based in school districts may be limited to 10 months of full operation. In order to maintain needed services, Parents as Teachers affiliates based in school districts should provide personal visits to a portion of families year round, prioritizing visits to pregnant women and their partners, new parents of infants, and vulnerable families. In addition, it is incumbent upon the school district-based Parents as Teachers affiliate to ensure that its families are well connected to needed community services that operate year round.
Assessment and Goal Setting	<i>It is essential that parent educators complete and document a family-centered assessment and family-centered goals with each family they serve.</i> Parent educators use the assessment and family goals to plan and deliver services as well as to assess progress.
Personal Visits	<i>It is essential that at each visit, parent educators focus their work with families on parent-child interaction, development-centered parenting, and family well-being, ensuring that all areas are addressed with families.</i> The amount of time spent in each visit on each area of emphasis will vary based on family needs and goals.
	<i>It is essential that families receive at least 10-12 (monthly) visits annually spread out over the course of a year. At least 20-24 (twice monthly) personal visits must be completed for families with greater needs, also spread out over the course of a year.</i>

⁵ Previously referred to as "minimum requirements"

Areas	Essential Requirements <i>(the specific requirements are italicized)</i>
	<i>It is essential that experienced full time parent educators complete no more than 60 visits per month. The allocation for personal visits is based on approximately 1 hour for the delivery of each personal visit, with another hour for visit planning and preparation, travel and documentation of the visit. If travel time is significantly greater, the number of visits the parent educator can complete monthly will decrease. In addition, if the parent educator is visiting a family with more than one enrolled child, visiting time will be approximately 75 minutes and the total number of visits the parent educator can complete monthly will decrease. New parent educators will require additional time for supervision, as well as for planning, preparation and documentation of a personal visit; this translates into no more than 48 visits per month during the first year. Please note that the term “full-time” is based upon 40 hours of employment weekly. Parent educators should complete visits proportional to the percent of their employment.</i>
Group Connections ⁶	<i>It is essential that affiliates deliver monthly group connections focused on parent-child interaction, development-centered parenting, and family well-being across the program year.</i>
Screening	<i>It is essential that formal screening (hearing, vision, developmental, and the health record) be completed at least annually for all age eligible children. The initial screening must take place within 90 days of enrollment for each child. If an element of the screening has recently been completed and it is counter-indicated to repeat it, the results must be obtained and used to have a complete picture of the child. Please note that the approved screening tools and methods have been updated and can be found at http://www.parentsasteachers.org/training/training-gateway.</i>
Resource Network	<i>It is essential that at each personal visit, parent educators connect families to resources as needed and then help them to overcome barriers to access. Parent educators’ active collaboration with community resources complement and extend Parents as Teachers services.</i>
Supervision	<i>It is essential that a maximum of 12 parent educators be assigned to each supervisor or mentor or lead parent educator regardless of whether the parent educators being supervised are full-time or part-time employees. This maximum number of supervisees is based on a full time supervisor/mentor/lead parent educator and should be less if the supervisor/mentor/lead parent educator is not full time.</i>
Professional Development	<i>It is essential that parent educators access competency-based professional development and training and recertify with the national office annually. For parent educators:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Year 1: 20 clock hours of professional development – Year 2: 15 clock hours of professional development – Year 3 and beyond: 10 clock hours of professional development
Advisory Committee	<i>It is essential that the Parents as Teachers affiliate have an advisory committee which typically includes program personnel, community service providers, community leaders, families, and other stakeholders. The advisory committee must meet at least every 6 months, although the preferred frequency is quarterly or more frequently.</i>

⁶Previously referred to as “Group Meetings”

Areas	Essential Requirements <i>(the specific requirements are italicized)</i>
Evaluation	Affiliates must plan for evaluation of program implementation and outcomes. <i>It is essential that your affiliate collect and annually report data on service delivery, program implementation, and compliance with the model replication requirements through the Affiliate Performance Report.</i> Use of a management information system is the preferred method for data collection.
	<i>It is essential that affiliates gather and summarize annual parent satisfaction surveys and solicit regular feedback from parents about all model components.</i>
Additional Requirement for New Affiliates	
Funding	While it is preferable for an organization to come in with three or more years of funding in place for Parents as Teachers, <i>a minimum of two years' funding is essential for major sources of funding.</i> Parents as Teachers recognizes that many funding sources must be renewed annually. This is acceptable for the minimum funding requirement and distinguished from a funding source that is designed for one year only. There are no minimum funding requirements for existing affiliates.
Training Requirements	
New Affiliates	Existing Affiliates
<i>After completing and receiving approval for the Affiliate Plan, all new parent educators in an organization who will deliver Parents as Teachers services to families must attend the Foundational and Model Implementation Trainings before delivering Parents as Teachers. New supervisors must attend the Model Implementation Training.</i>	<i>Parent educators certified prior to January 1, 2011, who are with an existing program must attend Foundational Training and a model implementation retraining by July, 2014. Supervisors with an existing program must attend a model implementation retraining by July, 2014. New parent educators hired by an existing program (affiliated prior to January 1, 2011) must attend the Foundational and Model Implementation Trainings before delivering Parents as Teachers, while new supervisors must attend Model Implementation Training.</i>
Materials Requirements	
Your organization will acknowledge use of the Parents as Teachers curriculum and training in dissemination materials and evaluations.	
All Parents as Teachers curricula and guides are copyrighted. No part may be reproduced or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic or mechanical, including photocopying, recording, or any information storage and retrieval system, without written permission.	
Your organization agrees to follow the standard guidelines regarding credit, trademark and logo use established by Parents as Teachers.	

Appendix A: Suggested Hearing and Vision Screening Tools

For the most recent information on costs and training guidelines, please see the company's website.

Instrument	Type	Cost	Company
Required Hearing Screening Tools			
AuDX®	Otoacoustic emissions technology	\$4,000	Bio-logichttp://www.natus.com/
Ero-Scan	Otoacoustic emissions technology	\$3,800	Maico Diagnostics http://www.maico-diagnostics.com/
Maico Pure Tone Screener	Audiometer ⁷	\$900	Maico Diagnostics http://www.maico-diagnostics.com/
Pilot audiometer	Audiometer	\$2,150	Maico Diagnostics http://www.maico-diagnostics.com/
Supplemental Vision Screening Tools (for Children 30 months of age and older) ⁸			
Lea Symbols	Acuity charts	\$36	School Health catalog http://www.schoolhealth.com/
Wright Eye chart	Acuity charts	\$35	AAP Bookstore http://www.aap.org
SureSight™ Vision Screener	Automated technology	\$4,700	Welch Allyn http://www.welchallyn.com/
PediaVision® Assessment Solution [Includes camera device, laptop, printer, software]	Automated technology	\$10,000+	PediaVision® http://www.pediavision.com/

⁷ Audiometry is not suitable for children below the age of 30 months. Hearing screening using otoacoustic emissions is required for meeting the essential requirement for hearing screening if you are serving children between the ages of birth and 30 months.

⁸ The Model Implementation Training includes training on functional vision screening, which satisfies the essential requirement for vision screening and is suitable for children from birth onwards.

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