Family involvement

Introduction

Families come in many forms and are central to children’s lives in and out of Bega Valley Shire Council education and care services. Children have told us that families are important to them. Our commitment to involving families in their child’s life in the service will take many forms.

Educators and Staff will work with families in order to understand more about:

- How they know their child, what is important to their child and what we can do to help a child have their ‘best day’.
- Include services to families in the centres that help them to be together, stay together, manage their lives together and ensure that they are also part of their child’s best day.

Strategies

Educators and staff will:

- Ask families how they would like to be involved in their child’s service.
- Use this information to review current options for involvement at each service, and to plan new events and involvement opportunities.
- Offer families a range of options for involvement that may include:
  - Providing the service with information about their child’s likes, dislikes, interests, concerns, pleasures
  - Sharing information about their family history, context, special family events or customs
  - Adding to their child’s records
  - Suggesting program ideas or discussing the questions that teachers have about how the program is operating
  - Offering information about how the service is operating and meeting the needs of their family
  - Making recommendations for improvements to the service or to the programs
  - Sharing special skills with other children, families or teachers
  - Spending time with their child in the service eg reading stories
  - Fundraising, seeking special grants, special interest groups or helping with special projects
- Contributing to notice-boards, newsletters or other forms of communication
  - Assisting with excursions, special days or events, transition to school projects and other community events
• Make a commitment to sustaining families. The range of options may include:
  o Providing information to families about each child’s day, the program and the service. (Refer to the children’s services handbook)
  o Working with support organisations and specialist children’s services including CIFTS, Community Health Workers, Katungal, Brighter Futures, Department of Community Services
  o Being involved in projects that enhance family life including Brighter Futures parenting programs
  o Whenever possible supporting individual families in their parenting
  o Assisting families to meet the requirements of government departments in relation to CCB, immunisation, child records and other matters
  o Providing information about other services to families and making referrals to other organisations
  o Reviewing the profile and structure of the service offered to ensure it continues to be accessible and meet the needs of families and the community

• Make time available for confidential and uninterrupted conversations whenever appropriate.

Evaluation

All families are included in their education and care service and have an opportunity to make a meaningful contribution.

References

• Eden Child Care Centre, Staff Meeting Minutes May, 2012