

Direct Online Link: <http://ilearlychildhoodcollab.org/git/principlesgit.html>

Principles of Successful Partnerships

Wisdom from Our Colleagues

Take time to develop the partnership.

Get to know each other's philosophies and become familiar with each other's services. Be patient; building trust and cultivating openness takes time. As partners, identify the non-negotiables--things that you can't relinquish.

Draw from the strengths of all partners.

As you assess and come to know the expertise and resources of each partner, call on everyone's individual strengths to build your joint ventures. Recognize and speak often about the strengths of your partner(s)--this builds confidence on both sides.

Seek openness, honesty, and mutual respect.

When partners bring an open mind, the ability to listen, and the desire to explore new ways of working and delivering service, they foster innovation and growth for all partners. Communicate ideas clearly and concretely.

Thrive on an atmosphere of positive thinking.

Continually open up possibilities for the partnership and programming. Be flexible and reasonable.

Recognize excellence and seek it.

Knowing what is going well and what needs to be better are first steps in continuous Quality improvement. Partners should seek expert consultation and should measure their services against the highest standards and best practice.

Hold to a vision and know how to get there.

Articulating the vision often and establishing clear, measurable steps on how to get there will move the partnership forward. Review goals and steps at least annually, and use the goals to measure progress. Express critical as well as positive feedback in ways that it can be heard.

Abide by rules and honor agreements.

Successful partnerships are based on respect for the rules and regulations for all funders and collaborators. Successful partnerships have detailed written agreements that are reviewed regularly.

Implement a systems-focused approach.

Partners with a systems-focused approach plan thoroughly and develop procedures so that their relationship functions smoothly. Systems become the backbone of the partnership's operations. Systems for oversight, self-assessment, customer/community responsiveness, and communication help to ensure high Quality.

Adapt to changing environments and resources.

Today's ever-changing norms, regulations, and family structures require that partners stay abreast of changes that will affect their partnerships and services and develop plans accordingly.

Actively and willingly "dance" and laugh.

Have a sense of humor. Successful partnerships involve willing partners who want to "dance" together -- it takes work to learn the steps, but remember to have fun.

Source: Website of QUILT (Quality in Linking Together, Early Education Partnerships): <http://www.quilt.org>