

Families and Schools Partnering for Children's Literacy Success

FAMILY TRACK | FACILITATOR'S GUIDE



The National Center on Improving Literacy
Families and Schools Partnering for Children's Literacy Success
Family Track – Facilitator Guide

Introduction

Overview of the National Center on Improving Literacy (NCIL)

The NCIL's mission is to increase access to, and use of, evidence-based approaches to screen, identify, and teach pre-K to grade 12 students with literacy-related disabilities, including dyslexia. This workshop is part of a series on key roles that families can play in supporting children's literacy success. Each of the workshops expands upon information in NCIL's literacy briefs and infographics on these key roles:

- *Supporting Your Child's Literacy Development at Home*
- *Learning About Your Child's Reading Development*
- *Partnering with Your Child's School*
- *Advocating for My Child's Literacy Needs*

Purpose of and Intended Audience for the Workshop

The workshop is designed for parents and caregivers of children in preschool through grade twelve. The workshop expands on NCIL's *Partnering With Your Child's School* literacy brief and infographic. During these sessions, participants learn evidence-based information about children's reading development and receive guidance on how to talk and interact often with families, discuss literacy instruction and intervention, share literacy resources, and address concerns together. The sessions are:

- Session 1 - Family Engagement & Communicate and Interact Often
- Session 2 - Discuss Literacy Instruction and Intervention
- Session 3 - Practice Literacy Skills at Home
- Session 4 - Address Concerns Together

Purpose and Organization of the Facilitator Guide

The purpose of the facilitator guide is to provide information and materials to effectively facilitate the workshop in person as a series and enable participants to achieve the learning objectives. The facilitator guide is organized by sections. Each section includes: the intended

*For subsequent workshop agendas, consider incorporating a "share-out" after the welcome and introduction. Allow participants to talk about the strategies, tips, and activities they tried after the previous workshop and what happened.

learning objectives, needed materials and equipment, the big ideas, and the suggested facilitation procedure. Accompanying this guide is a PowerPoint file that includes all parts of this workshop. Each PowerPoint slide includes facilitator notes, resource/activity directions, and guiding questions (where applicable).

Organization of the PowerPoint Slides and Notes

The following formats are applied for all slide decks. Please familiarize yourself with these formatting conventions so you know how to easily navigate the PowerPoint notes.

- The pink backpack  on a slide indicates there are resources to be distributed. These resources can be reviewed during the workshop, or participants can review on their own. You can click on the icon directly from the slide to access the online version. The URL is included in the speaker's notes. If the training is in person, you may choose to print some out and distribute as handouts.
- If there is a video, the link will be provided in the slide notes. In some cases, the transcript for the video is provided so that you can decide if you want to show the video, or if you want to cover the topic through a discussion.
- Hidden slides are optional and may be used at the presenter's discretion based on the needs of the audience.
- **Yellow highlighted text** on the slides is for you to customize based on your state/grade for the presentation.
- In the Notes section of the slides:
 - **Bold text = Presenter script (what the presenter should say).**
 - Regular text = Presenter notes (reminders or instructions).
 - *Italic text = Ideas for activity or interaction.*
 - Underlined text = specific contexts (e.g., Zoom vs. in-person).
 - Regular text with bullet = specific instruction.
 - * Asterisks indicate hints or ideas for customization.
 - CLICK = Directions for slide animations.

Overview of the Workshop Series

As mentioned above, the Families and Schools Partnering for Children's Literacy Success workshop series is divided into four workshop sessions: 1) family engagement & communicate and interact often; 2) discuss literacy instruction and intervention; 3) practice literacy skills at home; and 4) address concerns together. Each workshop session lasts approximately 30-60 minutes.

This session design is a suggestion only. Please adjust the number of sessions, content, presentation, and/or session length based on your needs and those of participants. For example, the workshop can be done in one longer session or broken down into two (2) two-hour sessions or four (4) one-hour sessions. Also, content may need to be modified or scaffolds added to support participants' access to or understanding of the material.

Facilitator Roles and Responsibilities

The facilitator plays a key role in successfully disseminating the workshop. He or she should be able to fulfill the roles and responsibilities of the facilitator, understand adult learning principles, and have a good rapport with parents and caregivers. The facilitator may participate in person or virtually. If virtually, an on-site host is recommended to handle logistics and greet participants.

Before the workshops, the facilitator:

- Reviews the elements of the facilitator guide and workshop content, including handouts, videos, and resources.
- Decides what information to share, customizing as needed.
- Checks that all links to videos and resources are working.
- Reads the session information in the facilitator guide.
- Prepares for the session by addressing information in the facilitator guide, including printing the PowerPoint slides in notes format for use during the workshop.
- Follows your organization's participant communication and registration processes, including drafting and sending an agenda (see examples in Appendix).

During the workshops, the facilitator:

- Presents the information on each slide using the script or directions in the notes as a guide.
- Facilitates any activities and discussions, and poses guiding questions for reflection on content at specified times during the workshop.
- Plays the workshop section videos, reviews the resources, and conducts the activities.
- Answers questions and provides clarification as needed.
- Contextualizes and personalizes content, including what the information means for students with disabilities.

After the workshops, the facilitator:

- Notes participant questions and comments that need addressing and follows up.
- Distributes and collects workshop evaluation forms, and then reviews and uses evaluation feedback to inform the design, content, and/or delivery of future workshops.
- Distributes the "Partnering for Children's Literacy Success" Checklist for optional self-assessment.

Session 1

Family Engagement & Communicate and Interact Often

Learning Objectives

- To learn the characteristics of family engagement and the conditions that support effective home-school partnerships for literacy.
- To learn what family engagement may look like in a system of literacy support and services, like a Multi-tiered System of Support for Reading (MTSS-R).

Materials and Equipment

- Laptop computer with audio speakers, projector, and display screen*
- Wireless internet connection*
- Workshop link
- Chart paper, sticky notes, and pens
- One copy per participant (in presentation order):

Handout Title	Slide #	URL
Family Engagement and Student Success: What the Research Says	10	https://www.understood.org/en/articles/family-engagement-and-student-success
Why Family Engagement Matters for Student and School Success	11	https://www.pta.org/docs/default-source/files/cfe/family-engagement-matters.pdf
Family Engagement in MTSS	12	https://vtss-resources.vcu.edu/media/resources-vtss-ric/implementation-resources/student-family-community/FamilyEngagementinMTSS,WhatResearchSays11_2024.pdf
Understanding Screening: Overall Screening and Assessment	13	https://improvingliteracy.org/resource/understanding-screening-overall-screening-and-assessment/ https://improvingliteracy.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/11/ncil-understanding-screening_-overall-screening-and-assessment-infographic.png
Questions to Ask Your Child's School About RTI	14	http://cpacinc.org/docs/LDorg_RTIquestions.pdf

Talk with Your Child's Teacher		https://www.colorincolorado.org/article/talk-your-childs-teacher
Talk with Your Child's Teacher - Hablar con los maestros de su hijo	14	https://www.colorincolorado.org/es/articulo/hablar-con-los-maestros-de-su-hijo
Reading Milestones	16	https://kidshealth.org/en/parents/milestones.html?view=ptr&WT.ac=p_ptr
How Families Can Partner with Schools on Literacy Development	17	https://improvingliteracy.org/resource/how-families-can-partner-with-schools-on-literacy-development/

Videos (in presentation order):

Topic/Video Title	Slide #	Time <i>min:sec</i>	URL
How Do You Use Data to Inform Instruction?	13	1:32	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2sC_PB-ldRE&t=81s
TOTAL		1:32	

Big Ideas

- Family engagement for children's literacy learning and achievement is a shared responsibility among families, schools, and communities.
- Trust is the primary ingredient for strong home-school relationships for children's literacy learning and achievement. Strong home-school relationships rely on open, two-way communication.
- An effective system of support and services for children's literacy learning involves home and school partnering together.

Procedure

- Refer to the session PowerPoint slides and speaker notes for facilitator guidance and instructions.

Next Steps

- Answer participant questions and provide time for comments.
- Distribute and collect an evaluation form from each participant.

- Provide participants with information about the next workshop or related resources if available.
- Encourage participants to try out strategies, tips, and activities learned during the workshop with their children.

Session 2

Discuss Literacy Instruction and Intervention

Learning Objectives

- To learn how families and schools can partner to help children get evidence-based literacy instruction and intervention.
- To learn what to talk about when discussing literacy instruction and intervention.

Materials and Equipment

- Laptop computer with audio speakers, projector, and display screen*
- Wireless internet connection*
- Workshop link
- One copy per participant (in presentation order):

Handout Title	Slide #	URL
10 Key Reading Practices for All Elementary Schools	29	https://meadowscenter.org/resource/10-key-reading-practices-for-all-elementary-schools-with-strong-evidence-of-effectiveness-from-high-quality-research/
10 Key Reading Practices for All Middle and High Schools	29	https://meadowscenter.org/resource/10-key-reading-practices-for-all-middle-and-high-schools-with-strong-evidence-of-effectiveness-from-high-quality-research/
10 Key Writing Policies and Practices for All Schools	29	https://meadowscenter.org/resource/10-key-writing-policies-and-practices-for-all-schools-with-strong-evidence-of-effectiveness-from-high-quality-research/
Evidence-based Teaching Practices	30	https://ies.ed.gov/rel-southeast/2025/01/infographic-21
Intensive Intervention: An Overview for Parents and Families	31	https://intensiveintervention.org/sites/default/files/17-3324_NCII-Family-Overview-508.pdf

Videos (in presentation order):

Topic/Video Title	Slide #	Time min:sec	URL
What the Science Says About How Kids Learn to Read	28	3:55	https://www.edweek.org/teaching-learning/video-what-the-science-says-about-how-kids-learn-to-read/2019/12
Explicit Instruction for Struggling Readers Explained	30	4:14	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZO5tsmlp138&t=14s
TOTAL		8:09	

Big Ideas

- Knowing what scientific research says about how kids learn to read can help you determine if the literacy approach, strategy, or program being used with your child is evidence-based.
- It is important to identify if the evidence-based literacy practices are appropriate for your child's grade-level or if any key practices are missing.
- Discussing literacy instruction and intervention can help you determine if the literacy approach, strategy, or program being used with your child is designed and delivered effectively.

Procedure

- Refer to the session PowerPoint slides and speaker notes for facilitator guidance and instructions.

Next Steps

- Answer participant questions and provide time for comments.
- Distribute and collect an evaluation form from each participant.
- Provide participants with information about the next workshop or related resources if available.
- Encourage participants to try out strategies, tips, and activities learned during the workshop with their children.

Session 3

Practice Literacy Skills at Home

Learning Objectives

- To learn what literacy resources are important for you and your child's teacher to share with one another to better understand and support your child's literacy development and that of others.
- To learn how our language system works to listen, speak, read, and write well.

Materials and Equipment

- Laptop computer with audio speakers, projector, and display screen*
- Wireless internet connection*
- Chart paper
- Workshop link
- *Note: there are no handouts or videos for this section*

Big Ideas

- Two important foundational skills in early reading instruction are phonemic awareness and phonics.
- For children who struggle to read, working with phonemes and decoding words can be especially difficult.
- Learning to listen, speak, read, and write well also includes developing oral language skills and reading fluently and with meaning.

Procedure

- Refer to the session PowerPoint slides and speaker notes for facilitator guidance and instructions.
- Engage participants in completing the strand quiz at the end of the session.

Next Steps

- Answer participant questions and provide time for comments.
- Distribute and collect an evaluation form from each participant.
- Provide participants with information about the next workshop or related resources if available.
- Encourage participants to try out strategies, tips, and activities learned during the workshop with their children.

Session 4

Address Concerns Together

Learning Objectives

- To learn what makes reading a complex and unnatural process.
- To learn how to appropriately address your child's literacy needs early.
- To learn about reading disabilities, including dyslexia.

Materials and Equipment

- Laptop computer with audio speakers, projector, and display screen*
- Wireless internet connection*
- Workshop link
- One copy per participant (in presentation order):

Handout Title	Slide #	URL
Recognizing Reading Problems	50	https://www.readingrockets.org/topics/assessment-and-evaluation/articles/recognizing-reading-problems
Child Find: What it is and how it works	51	What Is Child Find Child Find Law and Evaluation Process.pdf

Videos (in presentation order):

Topic/Video Title	Slide #	Time <i>min:sec</i>	URL
Every Student Can Become a Better Reader	50	:58	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0FEjOInQHto
I'm Worried About My Child's Reading - What Do I Do?	51	1:35	https://youtu.be/KaoWhLPlh3k
TOTAL		2:33	

Big Ideas

- All children benefit from explicit, systematic reading instruction in phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension.
- Some children continue to struggle with reading even with evidence-based classroom reading instruction.

- If you or your child's teacher is concerned that your child's reading difficulties are unexpected or unusual, seek further information from the school and others about next steps.

Procedure

- Refer to the session PowerPoint slides and speaker notes for facilitator guidance and instructions.

Next Steps

- Answer participant questions and provide time for comments.
- Distribute and collect an evaluation form from each participant.
- Provide participants with information about the next workshop or related resources if available.
- Encourage participants to try out strategies, tips, and activities learned during the workshop with their children.

Appendix

Traditional or Virtual Workshop Agenda Example*

[Title of Workshop]

[Date, time, location]

Welcome and Introduction

Learning Objectives

Evidence-based Strategies, Tips, and Activities for [topic]

Questions and Comments

Next Steps