



National Center for

Family♥Professional Partnerships



Planning a Spanish Speaking Event

February 28, 2013



Agenda

- Introduction of speakers
- The Parents' Place of Maryland
- Center for Family Involvement
- Questions and Answers



Speakers

- **Zaylimar Bocanegra**
 - Latino Outreach Coordinator
 - The Parents' Place of Maryland
- **Maria Isabel Frangenberg**
 - Virginia Commonwealth University
 - Latino Community Liaison
 - Family 2 Family Center
 - Partnership for People with Disabilities



The Parents' Place of Maryland

- 3 Conferences: 2009, 2011 and 2012
- Full day conference, all in Spanish
- Average attendance per conference between all 3 has been about 60 people
- Free of charge, for parents throughout Maryland (participants from VA and Washington DC also)



Finding and Putting Together a Planning Committee

- Before you begin, determine what your purpose and vision for event is and think of partners who you have worked with before who would be a good match for this event
- Meet and brainstorm, come up with concept and budget, and determine agencies' capabilities to put event together
- Get a commitment from partners
- Delegate responsibilities
- Meet or speak regularly (every other month at first, then monthly as date gets closer) in person or by conference call



Agenda Setting

- Do what works for families (all day, half day, Saturday, etc.)
- Relevant Topics (i.e.. Dads Only Group)
- Do what works (i.e. keynote speaker vs. parent panel)
- Allow time for parents to connect with each other and with resources
- Be flexible



Finding Speakers

- Reach out to agencies you know and ask
- You may need to adjust your agenda/topics according to what speakers are available in your area
- Think global (i.e. is there a resource you could access via Skype?)
- Find and use parents who are good speakers



Finding and Choosing Accommodations

- Location should be easily accessible by car and public transportation
- Consider space if planning breakout sessions and/or childcare
- Consider A/V capabilities
- If serving food, make sure it is allowed



How to Reach Families

- Create fliers in Spanish and in English
- Distribute fliers via the internet, but also have hardcopies to give to families
- Radio and TV (Spanish stations/channels)
- Texts also work
- Registration can be offered via internet but must also be accessible by phone, mail or in person



Food and Child Care

Food:

- Food is always appreciated 😊
- If at all possible, ethnic food
- Lunch is a good time for parent connections to occur (can also do Q & A or panel during lunch)
- Lots of coffee throughout the day

Childcare:

- Committee needs to explore this option and decide what will work for them
- For the most part, parents will request it, but if not offered, they will still come



Challenges Faced

- Finding good partnerships
- Finding bilingual speakers
- Childcare requests
- Handling registrations
- Increasing gap between registrations and actual participants



Lessons Learned

- Wonderful outreach tool
- Parents truly need and appreciate opportunity to come and learn, share and connect
- Hard work, but well worth it
- Good partners are essential
- Great partnerships can come out of this effort



CENTER FOR FAMILY INVOLVEMENT

Overview

What informed the decision on what type of conference to fund?

- The Center for Family Involvement received funding from the Virginia Department of Health to conduct focus groups among Latino families of Children with Disabilities
- The statewide work of cultural brokers with Latino families of children with disabilities
- Need to educate not only families but educators and providers as well





Building Bridges: A Multi-Agency Effort

- 3 Statewide Full Day Conferences: 2011,2012 and 2013(in the works)
- Target Audience: Providers and Educators
- Open to families free of charge
- Designed to build capacity to increase access to immigrant families of children with disabilities
- Average of 100 attendees per conference





Planning Committee

In addition to The Parent's Place Strategies:

- Make sure that the members of the planning committee bring in different perspectives
- Multi-agency collaboration aids in building awareness of community needs throughout different sectors of state departments
- Ensures easier buy-in when advocating for change across the state





Setting the Agenda

- Include an opportunity for attendees to network and share ideas (moderated group activity)
- Look for speakers that address a particular issue of concern.
 - For example, our first conference was heavily focused on the diagnosis and treatment of autism in Latino children.
 - We brought 2 nationally known speakers to VA and used the opportunity to strengthen our ties with their organizations to continue to improve services for Latino children at risk of developmental disabilities in VA.





Finding Speakers

- Be bold! Don't shy away from asking a well known speaker. The worst that can happen is that they say "no"
- Be persistent: Speakers are busy people. It may take weeks (sometimes months) to get a return call, but when you do, it pays off.
- Describe your event to the speaker in an innovative way. Let them know that they will be part of a unique conference, and let them know how their presence will help ring positive change to your community.





Interpreters

- In the registration form, ask participants if they need an interpreter.
- For a full day conference, you will need at least two interpreters as it is customary for them to take turns every 30 minutes to minimize exhaustion.
- Logistics of interpreting:
 - Are they using headphones?
 - If not using headphones, where are they sitting?
 - Can the rest of the participants overhear them?





How to Reach Your Target Audience

- Ask everyone in the planning committee to send the invitation to all their networks. this is when a multi-agency collaboration pays off
- Talk about your event with your friends. You never know who has the perfect connection or a special interest in the conference topics





Challenges Faced

- Funding (Inter-agency collaboration comes in handy)
- Planning committee may have a very busy schedule outside of the conference work
- Finding inexpensive venues
- Don't underestimate the effects of air conditioning!
Some people will freeze, and others will be hot.
Prepare your guests for unpredictable temperatures in the conference area.





Lessons Learned

- If you are bringing a foreign language interpreter that does not use headphones, make sure that you make an announcement at the beginning so people are not wondering why someone is whispering throughout the entire conference.
- Be thoughtful about seating arrangements for people who are visually or hearing impaired, as well as those who are using any kind of interpreter.
- Start planning early! It doesn't hurt to have a meeting right after the conference to go over what went well, and what needs improvement for next time.
- Food lines can take up valuable conference time. Have a good idea of your caterer's plan to distribute the food.
- Don't assume that speakers will want their Power Points handed out to the participants. Some might prefer to have summary handouts.





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Websites

- National Center for Ease of Use of Community-Based Services
 - www.communitybasedservices.org
- The National Center for Family/Professional Partnerships for CYSHCN (NCFPP)
 - www.familyvoices.org/projects?id=0002