

Components of a Successful Family Event

- Objectives/Goals** - What is the purpose of the event? Is it to educate, entertain, or to bring people together to create community? Once you have established the main objectives and goals for the event, make sure they are posted as well as written on the agenda.
- Agenda** - Create a detailed agenda with times and facilitators for each section. It is helpful to have an internal and external agenda. Ensure that agenda items directly relate to the goals and objectives of the event.
- Involve key staff and teachers** - This buy-in is important to help spread the word and importance of the event.
- Develop a budget** - The budget should be specific. Maintain good records, keeping track of all income and expenses. Also, expect the unexpected; extra expenses will come up, so plan ahead.
- Schedule facilities** - The location and site of your event is critical for success. There are many factors to consider, including room capacity, whether you're having an in/outdoor event, if there are special needs for ramps/elevators, if you'll need a podium, stage or special equipment, and how many tables and chairs will be necessary for guests.
- Have plenty of food and drinks** - What kind of food will you serve? Lunch? Snack foods? Dinner? Buffet? Sit down? What kind of beverages will be available? How will everything be served and who will take the lead? Make sure to advertise that there will be food.
- Publicity** - Great publicity is the key to a successful event. There are many different methods you can use to get the word out about your event. Determine who you want to attend and then target your advertising accordingly. Use as many forms as possible; fliers, handouts, email, text and Facebook messages, phone calls, and word-of-mouth.
- Book a speaker/entertainer** - A strong motivational speaker, or performance can draw a larger number of attendees.
- Evaluate the event** - One of the most ignored, yet important, elements of project planning is evaluation. If you want to determine how successful an event is, you'll need to collect feedback from participants. Create an evaluation form to hand out for participants to complete at the end of the event. To encourage participation, your evaluation form should be anonymous and short.
- Make reflections** - Once your event is over, take time to reflect back on it. Also consider the entire planning process and the feedback provided on the evaluation forms. Reflecting back will help you improve the event for the next time.