A black background with a black square

Description automatically generated with medium confidenceFamily Engagement Activity Types

**Tip Sheet**



**What to do:** Review the list of the five family engagement activity types presented here. Consider what types of activities might work best for various purposes and the families you serve.

**Why it matters:** Family engagement activities aren’t a “one size fits all” undertaking. Keeping various options in mind can help you plan activities that are a good fit for everyone involved.

# Skill-Based Activity

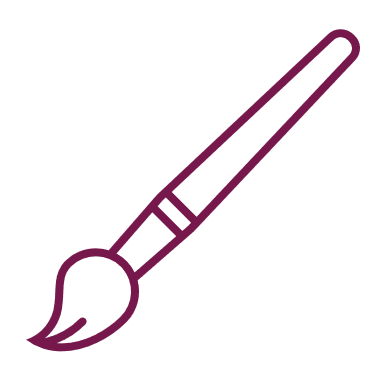
**Definition:** Skill-based activities help adults gain new knowledge and skills.

**Activities might include:** GED preparation; English as a Second Language (ESL) lessons or practice; workforce development seminars (e.g., resume writing, interviewing); nutrition and healthy living classes; courses on best practices in childrearing; and workshops on navigating school, district, and educational programs and policies.

**Why skill-based activities are important:** As families gain knowledge and skills, they become better equipped to support and advocate for their children, and more confident in their abilities. Also, their involvement in self-development, personal growth, and lifelong learning makes them good role models for their children.

**Tip:** Carefully design activities that teach new skills or develop talents to ensure that no families feel “singled out,” embarrassed, or stigmatized.

# Enrichment Activity

**Definition:** Enrichment activities provide experiences that adults find engaging, stimulating, and enjoyable. When these activities include embedded learning about an academic topic, they show family members ways to support student learning at home.

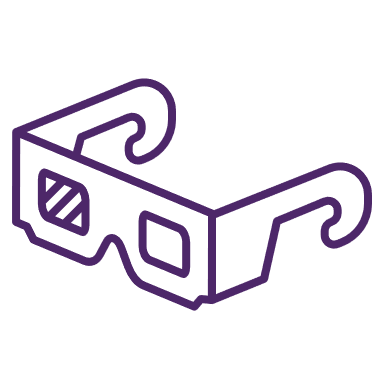
**Activities might include:** Painting, Zumba, or group attendance at an arts or sports event.

**Why enrichment activities are important:** Enrichment activities can spark new interests or hobbies, awaken dormant talents, and build social bonds as families enjoy experiences in a relaxed atmosphere. These activities encourage friendship, collaboration, and laughter. As adults build relationships with other families and with program staff, they’ll be more likely to attend additional program activities.

**Tip:** Involving families in selecting, planning, or implementing enrichment activities can help them feel invested and committed to attending. Create opportunities for them to share their own stories, experiences, and talents.

# Family-Student Shared Activity

**Definition:** Family-student shared activities allow family members to support their child’s learning and development in new ways.

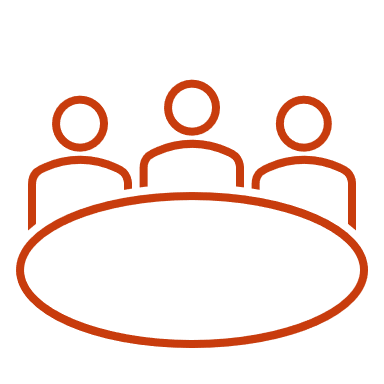
**Activities might include:** Educational game or movie night, family collaborative science fair or star party, family college tours, college and career planning events led by counselors and other trained personnel, a math scavenger hunt that focuses on fractions, a yoga session with mindfulness messages, or a “trashion show” art project that brings attention to environmental science.

**Why family-student shared activities are important:** Engaging families in fun educational activities with their children in a safe and supportive environment can strengthen relationships among program staff, family members, and students. The effects of these activities can carry over into the home as families learn and play together, discuss and build on positive experiences, and become confident and comfortable about being their child’s first and most important teacher.

**Tip:** Communication is the key to engaging adults in family-student shared activities. Let families know about activities well in advance and explain how it will benefit them and their children. Include details about times, locations, whether child care or transportation will be available, etc.

# Leadership Activity

**Definition:** Leadership activities empower families by engaging them in leadership and decision-making roles.

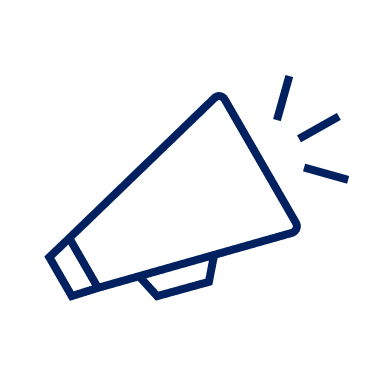
**Activities might include:** Family members serve on the program planning team, spearhead special events and programs, write a column or blog post for the 21st CCLC newsletter, serve as advocates for the 21st CCLC program in the community, and serve as mentors for other families.

**Why leadership activities are important:** Through these activities, families feel valued and are more likely to take ownership in the program’s success, become champions and advocates for their children and for the program, and become more involved in program planning and implementation.

**Tip:** Build on the strengths and interests of students’ families by inviting them to take leadership on a certain task or project. Also, look for ways to develop leadership skills. For example, someone wants to join a 21st CCLC program planning team, consider inviting that person to sit in on a few meetings prior to formal involvement.

# Resource-Linking Activity

**Definition:** Resource-linking activities help families connect with school and community resources.

**Activities might include:** Notifications about community events such as health, education, or job fairs; workshops on community resources; referrals to social services agencies; awareness campaigns on how families can advocate for themselves and their children; coupons and discounts for families.

**Why resource-linking activities are important:** Resource-linking activities introduce families to free or low-cost goods and services that can help them meet student and family needs. These services and resources might include community education classes; food/clothing/school supply drives; school-based referrals to local social service agencies; a map of free Wi-Fi zones in the area; free vision or dental screenings; and coupons and discounts connected to school-provided vouchers.

**Tip:** Involving school and community partners helps 21st CCLC programs serve students and achieve program SMART goals by helping families meet their needs. Often, people and organizations in the community are happy to collaborate, but first, you have to ask!

*There is no doubt that when family engagement is developed in true partnership, it has the ability to positively impact students … even within distressed communities.*

— Kelli Cedo



This resource was developed in 2024, and revised in 2025, by the Nita M. Lowey 21st Century Community Learning Centers (21stCCLC) National Technical Assistance Center (NTAC), funded under a grant from the U.S. Department of Education (Department) and administered by Synergy Enterprises, Inc. under Cooperative Agreement No. 287E230009 with the Department’s Office of Elementary and Secondary Education. Opinions expressed herein do not necessarily reflect the position or policy of the Department, nor does mention of trade names, commercial products, or organizations imply endorsement by the Department or the federal government. This resource is in the public domain and is available at [21stcclcntac.org](http://www.21stcclcntac.org). Authorization to reproduce it in whole or in part is granted.