

Community Capacity Building: a relational approach

We know...

WHY?

I believe...

Strategy Compass format courtesy of Tracey Ezard <https://www.traceyezard.com/>

Parental involvement has a positive impact on academic achievement.

Parental expectations for their children's academic achievements have positive impact on academic achievement.

Relationship between parental involvement and academic achievement is generalizable across different social and ethnic groups.

Wilder S. (2014) Effects of parental involvement on academic achievement: a meta-synthesis, Educational Review, 66:3, 377-397

The networks of support our young people need now are just as important as they ever were, arguably more so. Those networks must encompass families, school and community. We can be better at that, and must be. Schools can work on building such capacity, placing themselves with and within their communities. We must believe that all schools, in embracing their communities and fostering solidarity can shape a better and more socially just world. To do so, we must address the needs of all those orbiting around our unique communities by listening to their stories and addressing traditional lines of power.

There is no recipe for community building – no correlates, no workshop agenda, no training package. Community cannot be borrowed or bought.
Sergiovanni (1994)

Factual Whys Belief Based Whys

INITIATIVE

There is no one size fits all intervention for supporting parental engagement; not all parents are the same, have the same needs, face the same barriers or share the same conceptualisation of parental engagement.

Rudney, G. L. 2005. Every Teacher's Guide to Working with Parents. Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin Press.

A process for the designing and embedding of a relationship-centred and dialogical approach to family-school-community partnership and social engagement, driving transformation of social relations in the school yard and beyond.

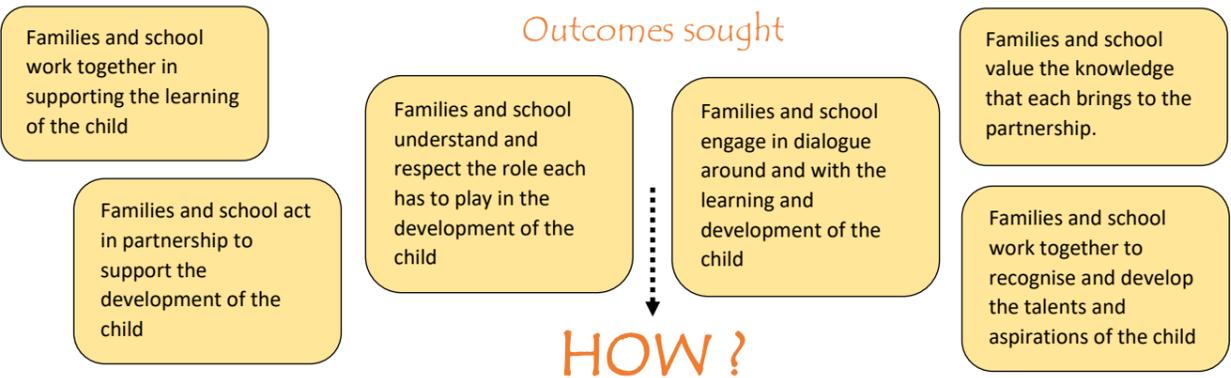
A sharing of transferable learning and lessons from the coach's experience as a school leader (with a strong belief in community engagement), a researcher (doctoral studies focusing on relational leadership and community capacity building), and as a community capacity building coach working with schools.

Every school community is unique and so this calls for active negotiation of family-school-community partnership in your context. This calls for a **relational approach to community capacity building**, connecting all community members, tying them to commonly owned goals, values and aspirations. Schools within communities, committed to inclusivity, democracy and social justice.

School communities can learn from the **community organising** tradition, where organising starts with listening and conversation at the ground level. No pre-set agenda. Responsive to local context. Working to engage passions and interests, encouraging action.

As busy practitioners teachers can often make assumptions about groups of parents based on very little actual knowledge about them or their situation; this is particularly the case when parents and teachers do not share the same worldviews, experiences or social capital.

Crozier, G. 1999. "Is it a Case of 'We Know When We're Not Wanted?' The Parents' Perspective on Parent-Teacher Roles and Relationships." Educational Research 41 (3): 315-328.



Relational leadership turns on our understanding of **relational power, relational trust**, and our willingness to truly engage with, listen to, and have authentic dialogue with all members of our *school* community. In looking to exercise communal leadership we need pay attention to community capacity building.

HOW?

We explore the concept of **Trust** and its development

Low risk social interactions:
Respect, Personal regard for others

High risk social interactions:
Integrity, Competence

Bryk, A. S. and Schneider, B. (2002) Trust in Schools: A core resource for improvement. New York: Russell Sage Foundation.

We explore the concept of **Power** and how it works

'If unilateral power emphasises power "over", relational power emphasises power "with" others, or building the power to accomplish common aims'.

Warren, M. R. and Mapp, K. L. (2011) A Match on Dry Grass: Community Organising as a Catalyst for School Reform. Oxford: OUP.

We explore the concept of **Dialogue**

"Without dialogue there is no communication, and without communication there can be no true education."

Freire, P. (1972) Pedagogy of the oppressed, Harmondsworth: Penguin.

We explore the concept of **Personal Narratives**

"We live in an age of surveys. The problem is that surveys don't work for social change... surveys are not stories."

Rabbi Dara Frimmer, Temple Isaiah in LA

We explore the concept of **Vulnerability**

"When we find the courage to share our experiences and the compassion to hear others tell their stories, we force shame out of hiding, and end the silence."

Professor Brené Brown (2012) Daring Greatly...

We explore the concept of **Partnership**

"Authentic partnerships are respectful alliances among educators, families and community groups that value relationship building, dialogue across difference, and sharing power in pursuit of a common purpose in socially just, democratic schools."

Auerbach, S. (ed.) (2012) School Leadership for Authentic Family and Community Partnerships: Research Perspectives for Transforming Practice, New York: Routledge

WHAT?

Relationships are created and sustained around authentic trust, respect and notions of mutuality and reciprocity. Space exists for those most affected at the 'grass-roots level' to identify the constraints they are experiencing. Collective efficacy and action grow in strength as individuals form groups, groups identify issues and develop projects that recognise and harness the potential in the overlapping spheres of influence in the lives of our young people: family, school and community.