

Jargon Buster

Action research	An interactive process that allows problem solving to take place through research and talking to people.
Action Plan	A document which outlines what needs to be done, who will do it and how it will be done.
Advocate	Someone who speaks or takes action on behalf of another.
Appreciative inquiry	A particular way of asking questions and thinking about the future based on what works and doing more of it.
Barriers	Things that get in the way – resources, emotions practicalities etc - that prevent something from happening.
Budget	A sum of money allocated to make something happen.
Consultation	Asking parents to comment or express views. E.g. seeking opinions about a document, idea or policy. (It is one of the six Methods of Engagement).
Culture	Ethos, values, attitudes that welcome Parental Engagement. ('Culture' is one of the four foundations of engagement).
Devolve	To hand over, give or pass responsibility to another person or group of people.
Devolved power	Handing over power and control to parents. E.g. giving a group of parents' sole responsibility for the contents and production of a monthly newsletter (It is one of the six Methods of Engagement.)
Education	Providing opportunities for parents to learn how they can promote their child's development. E.g. raising parents' awareness, developing their skills and knowledge, supporting and challenging their behaviours/attitudes. (It is one of the six Methods of Engagement).
Empowerment	The act of giving (or being given) the authority or the knowledge, skills and ability to do something.
Ethos	The culture, customs and traditions of an organisation or service that inform what happens and why.
Focus group	A form of research that involves a group being asked to explore their views, opinions, beliefs and attitudes towards something, and then sharing their points of view.
Foundations of engagement	The essentials that an organisation must have in place in order to successfully engage parents. These essentials can be put categorised under the four headings <i>Culture, Skills, Mechanisms</i> and <i>Support</i> .

Information	Communicating with parents about the service E.g. telling parents what is available, what is planned, how effective the service is, the results of consultations etc. (It is one of the six Methods of Engagement.)
Involvement	Ensuring parents have an influence on decisions and are part of the decision making process. E.g. parents have a role in finding solutions, endorsing and agreeing decisions. (It is one of the six Methods of Engagement).
Mechanisms	Policies, procedures and other organisational features that allow the service to plan and deliver Parental Engagement. (It is one of the four foundations of engagement).
Mentor	A person to help support and guide another.
Methods of engagement	The six different ways that a service can engage parents (i.e. <i>Information, Education, Consultation, Involvement, Partnership and Devolved Power.</i>)
Organisations	Large bodies such as Councils or Health Authorities which have lots of services within them.
Parent	The term ' <i>parent</i> ' used throughout this toolkit, includes all of the following people: <i>birth mothers, fathers, adoptive parents, step parents, same sex parents, grandparents, extended family members and other adults who provide care for children and young people.</i>
Parental Engagement	Parents taking an active part in the lives of their children through the organisations/services that provide for them.
Partners	Two or more people working together to achieve a common aim.
Partnership	Working together as equal partners to carry out work or run parts of the service. E.g. parents and staff running parts of the service together, involving parents in providing support for other parents, etc. (It is one of the six Methods of Engagement.)
People-centred planning	Processes and planning which puts the person as the central focus. There are generally no limits set over asking what the person wants, thinks or needs.
Policies	Official documents that outline what is expected by a service or organisation.
Practitioners	Members of staff who deliver services.
Procedures	The ways that staff are expected to go about their work.
Self-assessment	A process that helps services and individuals reflect on what they are good at and not so good at.
Self-awarded logo	A symbol that is used to give approval of your practice.

Services	Organisations that work with families (E.g. Health services, play groups, schools, youth support services, etc).
Service user	A person who uses a public service.
Skills	Staff knowledge, training and experience to effectively engage parents. ('Skills' is one of the four foundations of engagement).
Standing research panels or databases	Lists of people who want to be contacted to be involved in research or engagement opportunities.
Support	Resources, practical and emotional assistance to help parents engage. ('Support' is one of the four foundations of engagement).
Samoan circles	A leaderless meeting to help explore and resolve difficult issues. A process is followed whereby participants sit in two circles. The inner circle has one person representing each view. Only people sitting on the inner circle can speak, but people are free to move between the circles.
Video box	People telling their views via a video.
Virtual partnership	A group of people who come together to achieve a common purpose. They are usually not employed by the same service, but find ways to work together as a team.