

## How Family-Friendly is your School Checklist

**What is Family Friendly Checklist?** This is a tool to assess how family friendly your school is.

**Who should use it?** This tool should be completed by a team from each school. It is important to have some parents as part of the team that completes the checklist.

**How long will it take?** Teams using this tool can usually complete the tool in 1-2 hours. The tool can be revisited if the team decides to gather further data to support their ratings.

**How do we do it?** The tool is completed during a group walkthrough of the school, followed by a discussion. Group members look at the questions under each heading and, as a group, decide which ones best describe their school.

**What will we be able to do afterwards?** Team members will have a basic assessment of how family friendly their school is. This can then form the basis of an action plan with priority actions identified for your individual community.

Note: The term parents is used interchangeable throughout this document with families to refer to adults who have responsibility for a child/children.

# How Family-Friendly is your School?

## Welcoming Environment

	Already doing this	Could do this easily	This will take time	This will be hard
1. Friendly signs inside and out welcome families and visitors and explain how to get around the building.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. The school has standards of welcoming behavior that apply to all staff, including teaching and non-teaching staff (eg office staff, integration aides).	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3. Front office staff are friendly - they recognise visitors right away, provide information easily, and answer the phone in a way that makes people feel welcome and glad they have called.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4. There is a comfortable family resource room or area stocked with books, games, and educational information that families can borrow and where parents can meet.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5. The school has communications (eg website, newsletters) that welcome families, answer frequently asked questions and encourage further inquiry.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

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## Programs and Activities to Engage Families in Improving Student Achievement

	Already doing this	Could do this easily	This will take time	This will be hard
6. Current student work is displayed throughout the building. Exhibits clearly explain the purpose of the work and the high standards it is to meet.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
7. Many programs and activities for families focus on student achievement - they help families understand what their children are learning and promote high standards.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

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8. Special workshops, learning kits, and other activities show families how to help their children at home - and respond to what families say they want to know about.

9. The school reports regularly to families about student progress and how teachers, families, and community members can work together to make improvements.

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### Strong relationship between teachers and families

Already doing this    Could do this easily    This will take time    This will be hard

10. A liaison person welcomes families to the school, offers tours, makes translators available as needed, and introduces them to staff and other families.

11. Teachers and families have frequent opportunities to meet face-to-face and get to know each other - class meetings, BBQs, home visits or phone calls.

12. Teachers make personal contact with each family regularly (eg at least twice a term).

13. A family liaison helps teachers connect to families and bridge barriers of language and culture.

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### Developing Family's Self Confidence and Power

Already doing this    Could do this easily    This will take time    This will be hard

14. Families are involved in planning how they would like to be involved at the school.

15. School committees and Parent Clubs reflect the diversity of the school community and actively recruit and welcome families from all backgrounds.

16. The school is open and accessible - it is easy for parents to meet with the principal, talk to teachers, and bring up issues and concerns.

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## Professional Development for Families and Staff

	Already doing this	Could do this easily	This will take time	This will be hard
17. Families learn how the school system works and how to be an effective advocate for their child.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
18. Teachers learn about effective approaches to working with families of diverse cultural backgrounds.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
19. Families and staff have opportunities to learn together how to collaborate to improve student achievement.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
20. The school reaches out to identify and draw in local community resources that can assist staff and families.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Which areas are you doing well in? Which ones will need more work?

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How are parents involved in making the school open, welcoming, and collaborative?

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What are your concerns?

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Reflection: What steps could you take to help your school become more family-friendly?

Right away:

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What do you hope to achieve through these actions?

Short-term	Outcome envisaged

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Over the long term:

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What do you hope to achieve through these actions?

Long-term	Outcome envisaged

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