



Addressing the Barriers and Encouraging Families to Engage in School Wellness

Vanessa Spero, Angelika Keene, Beth Shephard
UF Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences Extension

Welcome, thank you for joining!

Please type any questions you have using the Q&A feature and Vanessa, Angelika, and Beth will address them at the end of their presentation.

If you are interested in joining the Healthy Food Choices in Schools Community of Practice or have any questions, please contact us at:
healthy_food_choices_in_schools@cornell.edu



Addressing the Barriers and Encouraging Families to Engage in School Wellness

Vanessa Spero
Angelika Keene
Beth Shephard

UF | **IFAS Extension**
UNIVERSITY of FLORIDA



Introductions

Vanessa Spero – Regional
Specialized 4-H Youth
Development Agent

Angelika Keene – Regional Public
Health Specialist

Beth Shephard – County Extension
Director, Family and Consumer
Sciences Agent

What is Family Engagement?

Family/parents working together with school employees/volunteers to assist in the development of school aged youth

Focus can be on:

Academics

Health and wellness

Extracurricular activities

Why is Engagement Important?

Increases/Improves:

- Grades
- Test scores
- Homework completion
- High School graduation rates
- Positive attitudes

Decreases:

- School absences
- At risk behaviors

Steps to Family Engagement



This Photo by Unknown Author is licensed under [CC BY-SA](#)

1 Address the Barriers



Language



Time



Culture



Transportation



Childcare

2 Educate the Family



School nutrition guidelines



Physical activity



Ways to support schools



This can be done through a variety of ways.

3 Communicate with the Family



Newsletters



Phone messages



Social media



Flyers



Bulletin boards

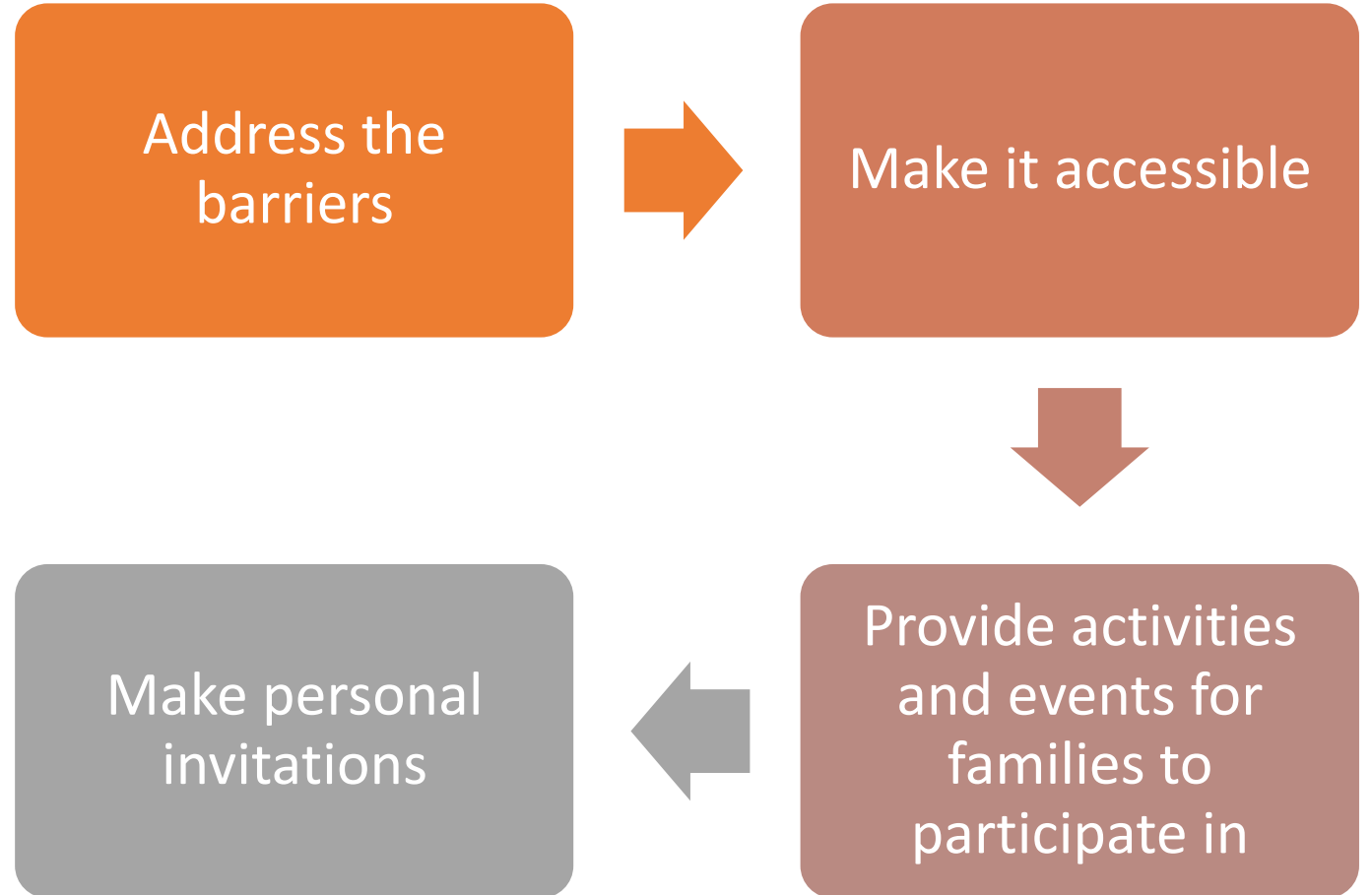


In-person trainings



Volunteer opportunities

4
Encourage
the family



5 Invite the Family



To be part of the planning and evaluation



To participate in a wellness committee

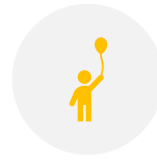
Strategies for Families



Assist with healthy fundraisers



Assist with events during the school day that focus on healthier options



Assist with healthy classroom celebrations



Make sure drinking water is always available



Look for ways to support cafeteria and district food distribution



Participate and encourage youth fitness programs



Learn about chronic health conditions to support youth

Other Resources



Centers for Disease Control



Your State Department of Education



Your School District



Your Extension Service



Alliance for a Healthier Generation

Questions?

UF | IFAS Extension
UNIVERSITY *of* FLORIDA