STEPS TO PARENTCHILD+ IMPLEMENTATION

I. Program Planning and Start-Up Assistance:

The ParentChild+ National Center provides extensive support and assistance throughout the initial planning process. You will receive regular port calls from the Program Startup Director, who will walk you through the process of bringing ParentChild+ to your community. This person will support you with the challenges and opportunities you may face as you consider start-up and the first years of program implementation. They will also help you develop and submit your **New Site Implementation Plan and Workbook.** Ongoing technical assistance and program support is available to you as you progress from the start-up to the program implementation phase.

- Agency Profile

- Identify the Local Sponsoring Agency

- Identify and Obtain Funding

- Completing Replication Agreement

- **Agency profile**: A potential ParentChild+ replication site and/or potential funder meets with national center staff or a state director to share information about the community, potential replication partner, and why ParentChild+ is a good fit. We will discuss the feasibility of program implementation, which includes our theoretical approaches and organizational alignment, as well as budgeting requirements, capacity for data collection, ability to support and supervise staff, and administrative capacity to implement the model with fidelity.

- **Identify the Local Partner Sponsoring Agency:** Communities or funders interested in establishing a ParentChild+ replication site should identify an appropriate local partner agency from community organizations providing services to young children, families, and child-care providers in the region they wish to serve. Possible local partner agencies include school districts, individual schools, social service or public health agencies, community-based organizations, immigrant aid organizations, United Ways, libraries, community health centers, and universities.

- **Identify and Obtain Funding:** Prior to implementation, it is important to understand the costs associated with bringing ParentChild+ to your agency. The sponsoring organization, in consultation with the ParentChild+ National Center, is

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responsible for identifying and/or raising the funds to operate the local ParentChild+ replication site. Each site puts together a different funding arrangement, but many ParentChild+ sites draw support from federal, state, and local funds, as well as from foundations, corporations, local service organizations and local businesses. The ParentChild+ National Center works with local partner organizations committed to implementing or expanding the program to develop funding sources and proposals.

- **Completing the Replication Agreement:** Each agency sponsoring a replication site must enter into a Replication Agreement with the ParentChild+ National Center. The agreement specifies that the local partner agency will replicate the program according to the National Center's protocols and staffing guidelines, with fidelity, and in accordance with the stated copyright restrictions.

  The Replication Agreement is returned to the ParentChild+ National Center with a Letter of Intent to Replicate the program from the local partner organization on its letterhead. Both must be signed by an administrator of the organization empowered to sign these documents and charged with overseeing the site's budget.

II. Implementation Planning and Workbook

- Values Alignment

- Startup Timeline and Operations Schedule

- Community Demographics and Defining a Service Area

- Ratio and Staffing Guidance

- Capacity for Data Collection + Quality Assurance

- Program Materials

- Creating a Family/Provider Recruitment and Enrollment Process

- **Timeline for implementation:** The first year of implementation is intense. There are several factors to consider when creating a timeline. First, what will your site operating schedule be: enroll and work with families and providers on a school-year calendar or enroll and work with families a rolling, year-round schedule?

  The implementation timeline is based on a variety of factors, selected operating schedule, alignment of funding sources, Coordinator recruitment and hiring, attendance at Training Institute (when is the next one scheduled?), onboarding and training of Early Learning Specialists, and the amount of time it takes to recruit and successfully enroll a full caseload of families and/or providers

- **Defining a service area and community demographics:** Most agencies define a service area considering factors such as geography, where the need is concentrated; distance, driving time, and transportation; target population; languages spoken; and funding parameters. ParentChild+ is designed to reach families/providers living in underserved and historically marginalized and low-income communities. It is important to determine your agency's definition of "eligibility" and whether it must meet funding guidelines. For example, to prioritize families, sites can look at:

  - The family is experiencing poverty.
  - The family has had limited access to educational opportunities.
  - The parent is a teenager.
  - A grandparent is the primary caregiver.
  - A family has multiple children under the age of five.
  - Family Is an Immigrant or refugee family.
  - Family speaks a home language other than English.
  - Family Is experiencing housing insecurity, which includes families living with other families or relatives or in temporary or transitional housing.
  - Family has been Involved with the child welfare system.

  Ratio and Staffing Guidance: The Replication Agreement describes agency requirements regarding Early Learning Specialists and Coordinator caseloads. On average, the maximum number of families a new full-time Specialist can take on

is 12 families (an experienced ELS (Early Learning Specialists) may work with up to 14). A full-time ELS with a caseload of 12 will dedicate at least 24 hours per week to home visiting.

Please note that ParentChild+ is program implemented best when Specialists work full-time because they can build competency in the model while fully participating in other administrative and professional development responsibilities. Replication site experience also demonstrates that full-time ELSs (Early Learning Specialists) are retained longer than part-time employees. A site may decide to hire part-time ELSs to meet language or location needs and if it identifies strong candidates seeking part-time work. Site staff responsibilities include:

- Recruiting families/providers and time needed to communicate and engage with them before enrollment
- Communicating and confirming home visit sessions
- At least 15 minutes of data entry and/or paperwork after each visit
- Addressing family issues, including additional time to refer, connect, support, and/or advocate for families
- One team meeting each week (minimum of two hours)
- One-on-one supervision and/or individual coaching sessions
- Training and professional development days
- At least one more hour of administrative record keeping each week, including VISM (Verbal Interactive Stimulus Materials) checkout and inventory organization or any pending data entry

- **Creating a Family Recruitment and Enrollment Process:** To recruit families from the community, the Coordinator and ELSs should make presentations and share information about the program with a diverse array of community services.

Speaking directly to parents and home-based child care providers is the most effective outreach. Coordinators should visit school, community programs, and other locations, including WIC offices, food pantries, school registration for older siblings, clinic waiting rooms, laundromats, playgrounds, and stores, at times when parents are present to connect with parents who may not be accessing other early childhood services.

Once the program is established in the community, the most effective outreach is often word-of-mouth. Parents often refer friends, neighbors, and relatives. The Coordinator interviews parent(s) to determine whether the program is a good fit for them and whether they are interested in participating. The Coordinator should partner with an ELS who speaks the family's home language, when needed, during this Initial Interview.

Creating a Visiting Structure and Schedule: Early Learning Specialists will have 92 touchpoints with each family; and 48 with each HBCC (Home Based Child Care) provider. They meet one-on-one with families and providers twice a week for the length of the program. Depending upon the site, visits are now being offered in an

in-person, virtual, or hybrid format. Depending on your implementation schedule (year-round or school year), families will be enrolled in the program from anywhere from 16 to 24 months (about 2 years), and providers from 6 months to a year.

- **Capacity for Data Collection and Quality Assurance:** As part of the ParentChild+ commitment to ensure data-driven delivery of its quality home visiting models, your team will be collecting a wide variety of data. To assist sites in evaluating both their effectiveness with families and providers and the long-term impact of the program, each ParentChild+ site manages their program data utilizing the program's secure web-based management information system (DAISY). The system is designed to store and report information entered by each replication site on the families they serve. The system generates aggregate site reports, along with state and national reports. The reports include demographic information on the families, providers, and staff, as well as data on service delivery, including the number of participants retained by each site throughout the program, the number of books and toys provided to families and providers, and the number of home visits completed annually. This process is fundamental to successful program implementation and outcomes. Coordinators will use data collection to guide program implementation, enhance program quality, and demonstrate program fidelity.

III. Program Implementation:

- Hiring a Coordinator
- Coordinator Training Institute
- Creating a Community Network and Referral Relationships.
- Identifying program materials (VISM) and inventory storage
- Fidelity Standards for Program Implementation and Site Certification

- **Hiring a Coordinator:** The Coordinator is hired/employed by the local partner agency. You should plan to establish an appropriate classification level for the Coordinator position that reflects the independent and skilled nature of the job. Typically, Coordinators have relevant prior experience in education or social work, experience in early childhood education or parenting programs, and knowledge of the community and/or work experience in the community. In many partner sites, the Coordinator is a certified early childhood educator, parent support specialist, or a social worker.

- **Coordinator Training Institute:** The Training Institute is designed to add to the Coordinator's knowledge base. This training consists of both asynchronous and live learning content. After initial training, Coordinators are provided a regular opportunity to interact with other colleagues implementing the model across the country through a Community of Practice.

  The site Coordinator must be trained by the ParentChild+ National Center or a or a regional trainer certified by the National Center. Attendance at the Training Institute is required for any newly hired Coordinators (including those previously ELSs). The success of ParentChild+ depends on Coordinators who fully participate in the educational requirements to preserve and apply the model

- **Creating a Community Network and Referral Relationships:** Partnerships are the key component of the program**.** The Coordinator contacts organizations and agencies providing services in the community to create a network of support and referral services for participating families (some of these services may be available within the implementing agency). She/he becomes familiar with available community services to facilitate referrals for program families. The Coordinator also works with these agencies to refer eligible families to ParentChild+.

  Community agencies to include in referral network:

  - Social Service and Mental Health Agencies
  - Public/Mental Health Clinics
  - Faith-based Organizations
  - Food Pantries
  - WIC programs
  - Immigrant advocacy organizations

- Schools/School Districts – administration, faculty, social workers, parent groups
- Early Intervention Services
- Boards of Health
- Teen Parenting Programs
- Head Start programs
- Family Resource Centers

- **Hiring and Training Early Learning Specialists:** The Coordinator must work within the local partner organization's personnel guidelines for the hiring of Early Learning Specialists. ParentChild+ guidelines do not include a minimum education requirement for Early Learning Specialists; instead, we emphasize the personal qualities and life and work experience needed to be a successful Early Learning Specialist. Very importantly, ParentChild+ places a priority on ELSs being members of the community in which they are working and speaking the home languages of the families they will be visiting. Coordinators will provide 16 hours of training for ELSs before they begin visits (Extensive content for this training is provided through Elevate, our learning management system).

- **Selecting and Purchasing Materials for Home Visits:** Each ParentChild+ site orders its own books and toys for home visits using criteria established by the National Center, outlined in the [Anti-Bias Materials Checklist,](#) and discussed in training. This allows each local site the flexibility to choose appropriate materials for the community in which it will be working.

- **Beginning Home Visits + Program Implementation:** The enrollment process often takes 3-4 touchpoints with each family/provider to ensure they can commit to the time and goals of ParentChild+. For example, the program must aim to establish collaboration and trust with the family while also determining if they meet eligibility criteria. One visit is where the Coordinator matches the family with an Early Learning Specialist and establishes a regular visitation schedule. Often, a Specialist will provide a sample home visit for the family and begin the process of completing the Family Information Forms. Also, the Coordinator and/or Early Learning Specialist should plan to explain the program's commitment to the family and determine the family's level of commitment to the program. The Early Learning Specialist and parent(s) may decide to have the family sign a Participation Agreement outlining this mutual understanding.

  Through training, weekly staff meetings, and one-on-one supervision. with the Coordinator, Early Learning Specialists will receive support and guidance on how to best implement the ParentChild+ home visiting model. Teams benefit from having a peer group practicing together to provide emotional and practical support to each other in this highly challenging work.

At least 2-3 times per year, the Coordinator should plan dedicated coaching time with the Specialist based on reviewing the recording of a home visit session. This is an aspect of program fidelity designed to help a Specialist grow into their role by discussing the strengths of the home visit practice and identifying areas where the ELS might benefit from further support or training.

- **Ongoing Technical Assistance and Program Support:** You will have regular support calls from a variety of sources within the ParentChild+ National Center. ParentChild+ provides regular, ongoing coaching and assistance to partner agencies on model fidelity, organizational capacity, program management, retaining families, use of data to improve practice, and participation in focus groups or research. They often occur with other Coordinators in your region to develop a shared frame of reference. New replication sites are also a part of a one-year Community of Practice with other graduates from the Coordinator Training Institute.

    The National Center also provides development and fundraising support, as well as marketing and communications resources, should you need to communicate about ParentChild+. ParentChild+ has created sample guidelines, templates, and reports to communicate with your partners and target different audiences and stakeholders.

- **Fidelity Standards for Program Implementation:** The ParentChild+ National Center monitors data entered in DAISY to ensure the program is meeting data protocols and fidelity guidelines. Agencies may download these reports and use them to monitor program implementation. During a collaborative annual check-in and the certification process, partnering agencies and National Center establish goals to guide program implementation, or enhance home visiting practice and program quality. Progress toward these goals is monitored and updated on an ongoing basis and reviewed at least once per year.