What is Site Certification?

Site certification is the required review process that leads to designation as an authentic replication of the ParentChild+ model and is an integral part of implementing an evidence-based model. In keeping with ParentChild+'s focus on reflective practice, the process of site certification is designed to provide an opportunity for sites and the National Center to step back and take a closer look at our work together Through this in-depth analysis and collaboration, we focus on positive change and relationship-building to ensure continuous quality improvement for all aspects of the program.

In order to achieve this designation, a site participates in a rigorous evaluation of all aspects of its program delivery to determine that the site is replicating the ParentChild+ model in the areas of program implementation, staffing, training, supervision, curriculum and data collection with fidelity. Sites must be certified in ordered to continue to be recognized as a ParentChild+ site, using the name, the evidence base, and the copyrighted materials associated with ParentChild+. When a site is designated an authentic replication of ParentChild+, fundraising and advocacy efforts will be supported and enhanced (public and private funders often verify with the National Center whether a site is a certified replication site).

Eligibility & Criteria

A ParentChild+ site is eligible to participate in the certification process after completing two full years and/or graduating its first cohort of families who have completed the full 46-week program.

Program Standards: Key Elements Required to Become a ParentChild+ Certified Replication

1)   Initial Phase:

The initial phase refers to the period between the initial inquiry and the implementation of the model.

- ✓ A representative of the "initiator" or prospective partner agency requests and receives in-depth information about ParentChild+ implementation.

- ✓ The prospective partner agency, working with the National Center, identifies funding to support the site, develops a budget, signs a replication agreement, and employs a Coordinator. Sites serving more than fifty to sixty families must have a second Coordinator, full-time or part-time depending on the total number of families being served.

- ✓ The Coordinator must be trained by the ParentChild+ National Center or a certified regional training center.

The elements described above must all have taken place (i.e. signed replication agreement, required number of trained Coordinators, etc.) before a partner agency can implement the Program.

2) Year 1 and Year 2:

The first two years or cycles of operation for a site are considered the pilot years. This is a learning period as well as a time for frequent collaboration with the National Center.

- ✓ The Coordinator has frequent e-mail/video call/telephone contacts with their state director or the National Center, if there is no state director for their state, and attends the annual conference.

- ✓ The Coordinator completes training by attending follow-up training 6-12 months after initial training institute and program implementation and completes all additional required online courses.

3) Year 3 and beyond:

After completing two full year/two cycles of operation, most sites are eligible for a certification review visit. A certification visit will be scheduled if the site meets the following requirements.

- ✓ Site Coordinator has been in her/his position for at least one year.

- ✓ Site is serving a minimum of twenty-five families.

- ✓ Site has submitted all required data and KEEPs (Key Elements for Establishing the Program).

- ✓ Site is using DAISY and all data is up to date (see page 3).

- ✓ Site Coordinator has regularly attended annual conference, as budget allows, in order to continue with her/his professional development and stay abreast of developments in the field of home visiting.

- ✓ Any outstanding fees or charges have been paid.

Certification Components

Early Learning Specialists (ELSs) -- Qualifications and Initial Training:

Sites should employ Early Learning Specialists *who speak the languages and share a cultural and community background with the families in the program. Research to date confirms that better outcomes for families result when a cultural/language match exists between the Early Learning Specialist and the participating family.*

- ✓ ELS participation is voluntary.

- ✓ Initial ELS training consists of at least sixteen hours of ParentChild+ specific training prior to starting home visits with families.
- ✓ ELS has appropriately nonjudgmental, supportive, personable attitudes toward families.

Early Learning Specialists -- in-service Training and Supervision:

- ✓ Parents are introduced to their Early Learning Specialist by the Coordinator.
- ✓ ELSs complete a home session record after each home session (introduction & review).
- ✓ Weekly minimum two-hour staff supervision/training meeting attended by all ELSs (group supervision by Coordinator).
- ✓ All home sessions are completed or made up by ELS or substitute as scheduling allows.
- ✓ ELS record videos of at least two home sessions annually (the Coordinator watches video and/or views home visits in person by accompanying the Early Learning Specialist).
- ✓ ELSs and Coordinator have one-on-one conferences at least twice a year.

Families in ParentChild+:

- ✓ Families' participation is voluntary and without fees.
- ✓ Program is provided to target population – families living in historically marginalized and underserved communities.
- ✓ Children are approximately age two (can be as young as sixteen months) at entry and are offered the program for at least forty-six weeks of visits over two years or cycles.
- ✓ Coordinator (occasionally an experienced ELS) conducts initial interview with family.
- ✓ Parents are provided the opportunity to evaluate the program in the middle of the year and at the end of the year; at least one of these reviews uses an anonymous written evaluation form.
- ✓ Training and supervision include explicit confidentiality/intrusiveness safeguards for families.

Home Sessions:

- ✓ Families are provided two home sessions per week in both Cycle 1 and Cycle 2; minimum of 92 visits.
- ✓ At least one parent (or primary caregiver) participates in each home session.

- ✓ Home session techniques: ELSs model positive interactions such as encouraging the child, following the parent and child's lead, using inviting body language, expanding vocabulary, and listening well, among others.
- ✓ Home sessions' ultimate aim: Parent/Primary Caregiver leads, ELS follows.

Books, Toys, and Curriculum:

- ✓ A storage container is provided to families for the books and toys.

- ✓ A minimum of twelve books and eleven toys are given to families each year/cycle, over a minimum of twenty-three weeks (forty-six home sessions) per program year/cycle. Sites are asked to note how many, if any, of the "toys" are art projects, and to describe those projects.

- ✓ Books and toys are presented weekly in a developmentally appropriate sequence, are gifts to the family, and are selected to be linguistically and culturally diverse and appropriate for families.

- ✓ For each book or toy, ELSs and families receive a guide sheet that the site develops from the National Center's model or obtains from the National Center's guide sheet library.

Coordinator's Administration of ParentChild+:

- ✓ Follows manual and uses National Center's forms appropriately.

- ✓ Completes annual data and annual KEEP and submits them to National Center in a timely fashion.

- ✓ Maintains files on families (electronic or paper) that are well organized, up-to-date, and confidential.

- ✓ Keeps work flow sheets (or effective substitute) current.

- ✓ Develops and keeps an effective system for storing and keeping track of books and toys.

Maintaining Data in DAISY, the ParentChild+ Management Information System:

DAISY is used for storing and reviewing all site information and data. It is crucial that a site keep DAISY updated both in terms of its own growth, planning, and continuous quality improvement as well as for quality assurance and research and evaluation by the National Center. All data listed below must be entered before a site can be reviewed for certification:

- ✓ Staff data is entered and kept updated.

- ✓ Site data is entered and updated.

- ✓ All family information forms, program child information, and parent/caregiver information is entered.

✓ All participation data and pre-and post-year information is entered.

✓ All family follow-up information is entered.

Certification Process

Certification is intended to be a collaborative process and supportive of sites' development and growth. The purpose of certification is to provide feedback, recommendations, and support as part of our ongoing commitment to quality assurance and improvement. A member of the ParentChild+ National Center team will visit each site to conduct the review. The cost of the site visit is included in the initial training and technical assistance fee.

The certification visit will consist of:

✓ A comprehensive review of the files and administrative procedures in place;

✓ An observation of a weekly staff-meeting of the Coordinator and all her/his ELSs;

✓ A focus group with ELSs;

✓ A meeting between the National Center representative and the Coordinator; and

✓ A meeting with the Coordinator's supervisor, Agency director, and the National Center representative.

Recorded Early Learning Specialist Sessions:

Sites are required to submit two video recordings of home sessions before the site visit that will be analyzed by the National Center team according to a coding protocol. If the Coordinator is doing home visits, one of the recordings included must be of her/him. No video or portion therein will be reproduced without written permission from the Coordinator who submitted the recording and the staff and family in the recording. The Coordinator must maintain a file of signed release forms from all program parents who have been recorded.

The National Center is looking for videos that exhibit "good practice". The National Center will evaluate the video looking at the interactions among the home session participants. Techniques that are evaluated include wait time when asking questions; body language that is inviting to the parent; open-ended and developmentally appropriate questioning; following the child and parent's lead; and listening well.

Review:

The site-visit, review of site data, and the home session recordings will determine whether a site has met the requirements to become a certified replication of the ParentChild+ model. The results of the certification review will be shared with Partner Agency within two months of the visit.

If a site does not meet the certification criteria, the National Center team will work with them to develop an improvement plan and their certification status will be reviewed six months after the plan is put in place. If the site demonstrates improvement through conversation, documentation, and/or additional recordings, they will then be certified. If the site fails to meet national standards or is not prepared to demonstrate improved performance at the six-month point, another site certification visit will be planned at a date to be agreed upon with coverage of the expenses related to subsequent visits to be negotiated in advance. If the site does not meet the criteria for certification at this juncture, the site will not be considered an authentic ParentChild+ replication and will not be entitled to any of the benefits of certification, including using the name of the program or the copyrighted materials.

Recertification

Recertification reviews whether sites are continuing to meet certification standards. The same elements required for certification must remain in place in order to achieve recertification. The National Center offers both regular recertification and enhanced recertification, depending on the status of the site.

Regular Recertification

Sites are required to go through the regular recertification process every four years after their initial certification is granted. The process parallels the initial certification process.

Enhanced Recertification

An enhanced recertification is triggered by significant changes at a replication site, off-cycle from the four-year regular recertification cycle. These significant changes include a change in leadership (Coordinator or supervisor); a significant shift in the site's demographics/catchment area or the number of families being in the program; a change in funding streams that is accompanied by a change in program goals; or a change in the local partner agency structure (a merger, the transfer of the program from one department or agency to another, etc. The enhanced recertification will parallel the initial certification process with a particular focus on the change that prompted the process.