



# Family Liaison Self-Reflection Rubric

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## A Tool to Strengthen Early Childhood Family Engagement

*Version 1.0*

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Clinton County Regional Educational Service Agency



## RUBRIC OVERVIEW

The Family Liaison Self-Reflection Rubric is designed to support Strong Beginnings, Michigan's pilot preschool program (launched in 2021) for low-income three-year-olds. Family engagement and relationship building is an essential part of Strong Beginnings. Family liaisons operate in each program classroom and are uniquely positioned to assist Strong Beginnings' students and families meet their needs and growth by providing information, referrals, and support. They are community-builders within the program and their responsibilities include:

- Assisting administrators and teachers in family communications and support
- Facilitating families' transition into preschool and outside communities,
- Supporting families' interactions with their child at home.

While there are several guidelines for family engagement practices in early childhood education, previous tools often lack empirical data. Possible issues preventing data collection and analysis are tools being too long, disconnected from lived experiences, or a lack of capacity to collect and analyze data. To fill this gap, the Community Evaluation Programs at University Outreach and Engagement (Michigan State University) partnered with the Clinton County Regional Educational Service Agency (CCRESA) and Strong Beginnings' administrators and family liaisons to create an evaluative reflection tool for Strong Beginnings' family liaison position. Three themes were identified by the Strong Beginnings' communities that capture family liaisons' work: **relationship building with families, family support and advocacy, and program team collaboration.** By focusing on these areas of growth and development, family liaisons can be better equipped to support children and their families' holistic wellbeing and growth.

The Rubric's guidelines were derived from ongoing feedback and revisions from Strong Beginnings' administrators and family liaisons and resulted in a tool applicable and relevant to their work. Special attention was given to making the assessment brief, with straightforward questions, and respectful of the various stages and contexts family liaisons operate in. Because families often have different backgrounds and needs, this tool is not designed to provide a fixed list of responsibilities for family liaisons. Instead, the Rubric provides recommended practices, space for self-reflection, and professional development opportunities unique to family liaisons' role as community-builders. To learn more about Strong Beginnings, visit <https://cep.msu.edu/projects/strong-beginnings-program>.



# RUBRIC INSTRUCTIONS

- 1. Open the file or print:** The Rubric is designed in a PDF format. You can use it on your computer or tablet, or simply print it out as regular rating sheets.
- 2. Read the items and rate:** We recommend that you spend some time getting acquainted with the Rubric before you start the self-reflection and rating. Some people find it helpful to rate through an ongoing process; others like to rate the whole Rubric when the self-evaluation is finished. You may choose to pilot it beforehand to familiarize yourself with it.
- 3. Rating scale:** The rating scale is from 1 (low) to 5 (high); we provide specific descriptions for scores 1, 3, and 5. You may find sometimes that your ratings are above the lower score but not yet reaching the higher one. If you find yourself in between rating scores (e.g., 3 and 5), it is perfectly fine to rate a situation as a 4.
- 4. Note-taking:** You may use the blank space below each item to take notes and provide rationale for scoring. We have found note-taking very helpful, especially when sharing the results with your peers or for improvement purposes.
- 5. Total score:** A summary of the scores is available at the end of the Rubric. You may review the scores to find strengths and areas for improvement.

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## FOR MORE INFORMATION

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## RELATIONSHIP BUILDING WITH FAMILIES

### 1. I call the children and families by name.

1	2	3	4	5
I call <b>a few</b> of the children and families by name.		I call <b>about half</b> of the children and families by name.		I call <b>almost all or all</b> children and families by name.

List your activities and practices here:

### 2. I chat regularly with families and interact with children at drop-off, pick-up, and special events.

1	2	3	4	5
I chat with families and interact with children in person <b>less than once a month</b> .		I chat with families and interact with children in person <b>at least once every two weeks</b> .		I chat with families and interact with children in person <b>at least once a week</b> .

List your activities and practices here:



### 3. I return families' calls, texts, and emails within 48 hours.

1	2	3	4	5
Families <b>hardly ever</b> reach out to me.		I return families' calls, texts, or emails, though it sometimes takes <b>more than 48 hours</b> .		I return families' calls, texts, or emails <b>within 48 hours</b> , either offering a solution or letting them know I am working on it.
<p><b>List your activities and practices here:</b></p>				

### 4. I follow up with individual families to see how my support to them was helpful.

1	2	3	4	5
I <b>have not needed to follow up</b> with individual families because I have not had the opportunity to offer my support.		I <b>often follow up</b> with individual families to see how my support to them was helpful.		I <b>almost always follow up</b> with individual families to see how my support to them was helpful.
<p><b>List your activities and practices here:</b></p>				

### 5. I promote a welcoming and inclusive environment for all families.

1	2	3	4	5
I use <b>verbal and body language</b> to make families feel welcome.		I <b>spend extra time</b> interacting with children and families who might be from a minority or marginalized community.		I <b>encourage and enable</b> families from a minority or marginalized community to <b>contribute</b> to the program with <b>their time, talents, or cultural assets</b> .
<p><b>List your activities and practices here:</b></p>				

## FAMILY SUPPORT AND ADVOCACY

### 6. I strengthen families by helping, coaching, and encouraging them to be their own advocates.

1	2	3	4	5
I <b>pay attention to social cues or check with teachers</b> to provide additional support to specific children or families with signs of distress.		In addition to helping families meet their immediate needs, I <b>help families with problem-solving, build their confidence, and discuss community resources</b> with them.		In addition to connecting families with resources and helping with problem-solving, I <b>encourage families to look for outside resources on their own and to be their own advocates</b> when the opportunity arises.
<p><b>List your activities and practices here:</b></p>				

**7. I ask families about how they engage their child through the child's interests or their daily activities at home. I make sure they know of different ways to support the child's learning at home (e.g., a website, book, cooking, or exercising).**

1	2	3	4	5
I <b>have not learned much</b> about how individual families support their child's interests or engage them in their daily activities.		I have learned <b>from about half of families</b> about how they support their child's interests or engage them in their daily activities. I make sure they know different ways to support the child's learning at home.		I have learned from <b>almost all or all families</b> about how they support their child's interests or engage them in their daily activities. I make sure they know of different ways to support the child's learning at home.
<p><b>List your activities and practices here:</b></p>				

**8. I make sure families have support to address their child's social, emotional, and behavioral needs.**

1	2	3	4	5
<p><b>I have not had an opportunity to ask</b> individual families about what support they have to address their child's social, emotional, and behavioral needs.</p>		<p><b>I have talked to about half of families</b> regarding what support they have to address their child's social, emotional, and behavioral needs.</p>		<p><b>I have talked to almost all or all families</b> regarding what support they have to address their child's social, emotional, and behavioral needs.</p>
<p><b>List your activities and practices here:</b></p>				



## PROFESSIONAL TEAM BUILDING

### 9. My working relationship with classroom teachers is both positive and effective.

1	2	3	4	5
My working relationship with teachers is in its <b>early stages</b> . We are learning how our responsibilities should be divided.		My working relationship with teachers is <b>developing</b> . We sometimes run into conflicts and need to talk more about how we can better support families.		My working relationship with teachers is <b>mature</b> . We rarely run into conflicts and regularly discuss how we can better support families.

List your activities and practices here:

### 10. My administrators provide me with strong support.

1	2	3	4	5
My working relationship with my administrators is in its <b>early stages</b> . We are learning how to work together.		My working relationship with my administrators is <b>developing</b> . We use meetings to touch base and get business done.		My working relationship with my administrators is <b>mature</b> . We use meetings to brainstorm ideas and work as thought partners.

List your activities and practices here:

## FAMILY LIAISON SELF-REFLECTION RUBRIC

RELATIONSHIP BUILDING WITH FAMILIES		AVERAGE SCORE
1. I call the children and families by name.		
2. I chat regularly with families and interact with children at drop-off, pick-up, and special events.		
3. I return families' calls, texts, and emails within 48 hours.		
4. I follow up with individual families to see how my support to them was helpful.		
5. I promote a welcoming and inclusive environment for all families.		
FAMILY SUPPORT AND ADVOCACY		AVERAGE SCORE
6. I strengthen families by helping, coaching, and encouraging them to be their own advocates.		
7. I ask with families about how they engage their child through the child's interests or their daily activities at home. I make sure they know of different ways to support the child's learning at home.		
8. I make sure families have support to address their child's social, emotional, and behavioral needs.		
PROFESSIONAL TEAM BUILDING		AVERAGE SCORE
9. My working relationship with classroom teachers is both positive and effective.		
10. My administrators provide me with strong support.		
The total rated scores/the highest possible scores X 100%		TOTAL %

## LITERATURE

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