

# COMMUNITY & FAMILY SERVICES **SPOTLIGHT**

A guide of our projects and services to bring our families, schools, and communities together.



**COMMUNITY &  
FAMILY SERVICES**

DIVISION OF BLACK HILLS SPECIAL SERVICES COOPERATIVE

## Together we can do anything.

In the Community and Family Services Division of BHSSC, we're passionate about supporting communities and families. When families and communities are strong, we create nurturing environments where children learn, grow, and thrive. Our team works to provide meaningful resources, grow skills, and create partnerships that ultimately build the capacity that schools, families, and communities need to reach their goals.

## Let's connect!

We'd love to discuss how our services, trainings, or resources can support your school or organization.



**MORGAN VONHADEN**  
**CFS Deputy Director**  
MVonHaden@bhssc.org  
605.484.3401



Children do better

when communities,

schools, and families are

**CONNECTED**

# CONTENTS

FAMILY ENGAGEMENT	4
EARLY CHILDHOOD	10
STRONGER COMMUNITIES	12
MORE FROM CFS	14

# FAMILY ENGAGEMENT

We know that strong partnerships between families and schools are essential for student success. Through our various services, schools and families learn to be partners in supporting their students and the community.

## Family Nights

WITH SUPPORT FROM OUR TEAM, YOU CAN PROVIDE SAFE, FUN, AND ENGAGING LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES FOR THE WHOLE FAMILY

Bringing schools, families, and communities together has proven time and time again to have a positive impact on student learning and success outcomes. Family Nights are essential bridges between stakeholders to support student learning, foster relationships, and bring families and communities together within the school setting. These events can build a sense of community, supporting student success both in and out of the classroom.

Need help in planning or even facilitating family engagement nights? We are here to help! We offer directions, clear supply lists, and support to create a night of STEAM or Literacy activities aligned to South Dakota Content Standards.



# Family Engagement Leadership Teams

GROW SUSTAINABLE TEAMS TO LEAD FAMILY ENGAGEMENT EFFORTS AT YOUR SCHOOL OR DISTRICT



Creating sustainable systems of change in family engagement can be challenging! Where do schools and districts begin? Let our team of family engagement experts guide you through developed practices and procedures to establish Family Engagement Leadership teams.

These teams, comprised of school administrators, educators, and family members, will learn together through embedded family engagement professional development. They will work together in shared partnership to grow their own personalized Family Engagement plans and create systems of accountability that will work within the school to meet the needs of students, educators, and families.

# Family Voice

BRING STUDENTS AND FAMILIES TOGETHER FOR INTENTIONAL DIALOGUE ON SCHOOL SUCCESS

Family Voice aims to establish long-term relationships and school traditions that bring family and community voices to the table and, in return, promote a sense of belonging, shared responsibility, and student success.

Partner with our team to enhance authentic two-way communication between families and schools in organic and safe settings using the Appreciate Inquiry research model. School teams can better meet the needs of students and families based upon analysis of qualitative data compiled during family, community, and student focus groups.

## FAMILY FOCUS GROUPS

Our team helps facilitate discussion on topics such as belonging, student social-emotional needs, academic achievement, transitioning between grades, family engagement, and more.

## STUDENT FOCUS GROUPS

Our team creates safe spaces for students of all ages to vocalize their school experiences, leading to a better understanding of school or district needs and ideas to address those needs.

## COMMUNITY FOCUS GROUPS

We facilitate community focus groups within local spaces. The discussion focuses on topics the school or district wants to learn more about from a community stakeholder perspective.

## FAMILY & COMMUNITY SURVEYS

Surveys are a great way to get a “pulse-check” on what stakeholders think or feel about something. We can help you develop questions, create the survey, distribute, and compile results.

# Family Friendly Walk-Throughs

IDENTIFY STRATEGIES AND PRACTICES THAT WILL MAKE YOUR SCHOOL MORE INVITING TO FAMILIES AND THE COMMUNITY

The Family Friendly Walk-Through (FFWT) process is a research-based model, where school teams reflect on and rate the school’s family engagement practices to identify what is working well and opportunities for growth. The team utilized educator and family surveys and a school walk-through to gather data. Our team facilitates conversations and compiles data into a detailed report. Schools can continue the process with a data retreat for action planning and add coaching and assistance to track these changes.

## STEP 1

SURVEY FAMILIES & STAFF



**1+ months before the FFWT**

Family engagement surveys are distributed to both families and staff

## STEP 2

WALK-THROUGH OF SCHOOL



**Day of FFWT**

A team representing families and staff tour the school and identify areas for growth

## STEP 3

PREPARE SCHOOL REPORT



**1 month after FFWT**

Our team provides a detailed report with specific recommendations

## STEP 4

FOLLOW-UP SUPPORT



**Ongoing**

We can continue to work with the school to develop and implement an action plan



# Book Studies and Online Courses

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES ARE ESSENTIAL TO CONTINUE LEARNING THE LATEST RESEARCH AND STRATEGIES

We offer customized book studies and self-paced online courses in various areas and topics for any group, organization, or school's needs. No matter what needs an organization or school may have, we can assist in creating and facilitating unique, customized online learning experiences rooted in the latest online learning practices.



# Title I Family Engagement Planning and Consultation

MAKE THE MOST OF YOUR FEDERAL DOLLARS TO ENGAGE FAMILIES IN AUTHENTIC AND MEANINGFUL WAYS

Title I is federal funding that is included in the/required by the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA). Its goal is to provide all students significant opportunities for fair, equitable, and high-quality education to close educational gaps. Title I schools are required to conduct outreach to all school families and implement programs, activities, and policies for the involvement of families in their students' education.

## OUR TEAM CAN HELP YOU MEET THESE FEDERAL REQUIREMENTS:

- Developing Parent and Family Engagement Policies, both at the district and school level
- Budgeting funds to support schools with Parent and Family Engagement requirements
- Developing a shared responsibility for a School-Parent Compact
- Building capacity for family involvement
- Providing access to parents and family members to partner

Our services include writing and facilitating Family and Community Engagement Plans, budget assistance, and development of accountability systems for Title I programming at the school and district level.



# Family Engagement Workshops

Families are the experts of their children, and through authentic partnerships with schools and communities, all students have the opportunity to thrive in both academic and real-life experiences. Through our Family Engagement Workshops, educators learn how to develop and flourish family partnerships. Knowing where to begin or what research supports family engagement can be tricky. Through our workshops, schools and organizations can learn what true family engagement is, strategies to implement innovative family engagement, and shift mindsets on breaking down barriers for all families and students to achieve.

## SUCCESSFUL KINDERGARTEN TRANSITIONS THROUGH FAMILY PARTNERSHIPS

This workshop provides information on how to help children smoothly transition into the school setting through the valued partnership of schools and families.

## FAMILY ENGAGEMENT CHAMPIONS

Learn the latest research in family engagement and how to work within teams to grow partnerships with families to support student success.

## SAYING I DO: TYING THE KNOT WITH FAMILIES

In this interactive workshop, learn to assess the success of family engagement and partnerships in your school and create a plan to grow your work.

## FAMILY ENGAGEMENT 101

This workshop is a crash course in learning about what authentic family engagement is and how to use family engagement as a tool to support student learning, promote positive behavior, and grow relationships.

## BRINGING STAKEHOLDER VOICE TO THE TABLE

Dive into practices and projects to bring authentic stakeholder voice to the table as a critical data source for growing student success outcomes.

## HOW TO PLAN A SUCCESSFUL FAMILY ENGAGEMENT NIGHT

Learn research-driven ways to plan a family engagement night that meets the learning needs of students and families while also creating meaningful engagement.

## ENGAGED: DEVELOPING FAMILY PARTNERSHIPS IN AUTHENTIC WAYS

Understand and engage with ways to develop family partnerships past the typical "parent-teacher conference" or "school carnival." Dive into research-driven methods to develop school and family partnerships to support all students.



# EARLY CHILDHOOD

Every child deserves the best possible start in life, and we're committed to providing resources and training for families and providers to help infants and young children thrive.

## Early Childhood Workshops

Supporting students and families from cradle to career is integral to the success of all students and communities. A foundational piece to this is supporting families and students from birth through early childhood. Professional development opportunities to grow childcare providers' knowledge and skillsets will further support strategies that all students and families need before entering formal schooling.

### **MENTAL WELLNESS FOR EARLY CHILDHOOD PROFESSIONALS**

Learn how to handle stress, anxiety, and feelings of "burnout" in this workshop that focuses on mental wellness for early childhood professionals.

### **INCLUDING FAMILY VOICE IN SYSTEMS CHANGE WORK**

When growing and changing systems, where do families fit in? Learn how to authentically learn from families to support systems change in your organization.

### **FAMILY ENGAGEMENT WITH SOUTH DAKOTA STATEWIDE FAMILY ENGAGEMENT**

What does it mean for a family to be engaged with their young learner in an early childhood setting? Learn practices to engage families in the beginning stages of their child's educational journey.

### **TRAUMA-INFORMED PRACTICES FOR YOUNG CHILDREN**

Early childhood practices through a trauma-informed lens provides educators and families with the skills to help children manage emotions.

### **EARLY LITERACY FOR PROVIDERS AND FAMILIES**

Learn about strategies to support young children's language and literacy skills to increase their school readiness in home and childcare environments.

# STRONGER COMMUNITIES

We believe that strong communities are built on a foundation of trust, understanding, and support for one another. We're dedicated to providing opportunities for people of all ages and backgrounds to come together, learn, and grow.

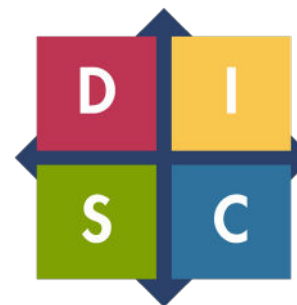


## Poverty Escape Room

LEARN AND DISCUSS HOW POVERTY AFFECTS ASPECTS OF DAILY LIFE IN YOUR COMMUNITY

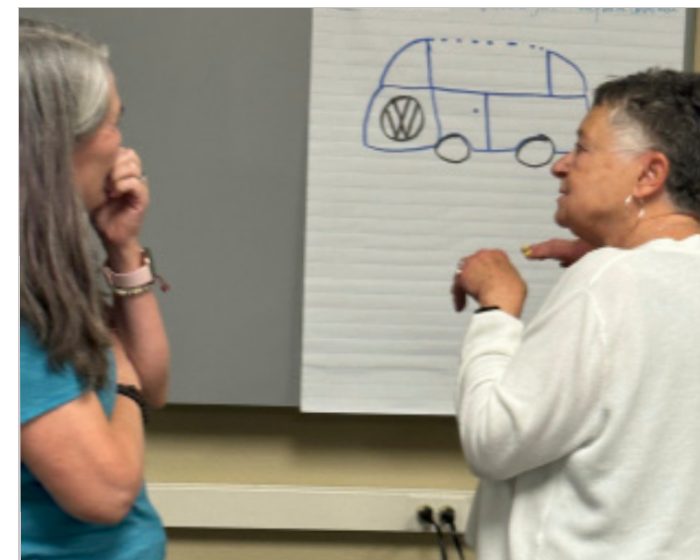
The Poverty Escape Room isn't a traditional simulation or workshop. In this hands-on learning environment, participants will experience a simulated day in the life of an individual who lives in poverty. While we all know that you simply cannot "escape" poverty, the goal is to bring awareness to how poverty impacts the students and families we work with and to begin constructive conversations around poverty.

Participants will experience firsthand the barriers those living in poverty navigate daily through a true story based on a South Dakotan's lived experiences. Our team will then facilitate a discussion and provide information about our community and the epidemic of poverty.



## DISC Teambuilding

HELP YOUR TEAM UNDERSTAND THEMSELVES AND EACH OTHER BETTER WITH DISC PROFILES



Having a healthy school or organizational environment is essential, not only for staff members, but also for students, families, and key stakeholders. The DISC Assessment is a tool to gain personalized insight into your team members which can be used to develop skills in communication, efficacy, and teamwork.

From the assessment, our specialists will engage leaders in critical analysis of the varying "types" of people on their team and use that data to develop an action plan. We will work with school or organization leaders to plan activities that will lead team members to deeper understanding on who they are as teammates, how they communicate, and where they place value for their work.



# MORE FROM CFS

We know that strong partnerships lead to bigger impacts. We're proud to lead several collaborative projects that support communities in South Dakota.



The South Dakota Statewide Family Engagement Center (SFEC) unites students, families, schools, and communities together by focusing on learner needs from “cradle to career.” SFEC strives to ensure that all learners—especially English Language Learners, economically disadvantaged learners, and minority students—have the support they need to achieve academic, career, and life goals.

SFEC is possible through various statewide partnerships.



What happens before and after school and during the summer can have a huge impact on the learning and development of South Dakota youth. Path2Impact is a project funded with federal dollars available to the South Dakota Department of Education through the American Rescue Plan (ARP) to support out-of-school time (OST) programs in the areas of leadership, professional development, curriculum content, staff onboarding, and more.



The 21st Century Discovery Programs enhance a student's normal learning opportunities everyday after school and during the summer. The programs immerse students in project-based STEM, reading, art, health, and social-emotional learning activities they can use outside of the school walls. The programs not only provide a safe and secure setting for children, but also give students the opportunity to belong to something bigger than just themselves—a stepping stone to becoming upstanding citizens.



Families First Home Visiting (FFHV) empowers families in rural communities to provide their children with the best possible start in life through evidence-based, parent-focused home visiting. Families First provides home visiting for families with children birth to six who don't receive home visiting services from another program. Home educators support parents in building nurturing relationships, promoting optimal development, and achieving their family goals.





# COMMUNITY & FAMILY SERVICES

DIVISION OF BLACK HILLS SPECIAL SERVICES COOPERATIVE

[bhssc.org/cfs](https://bhssc.org/cfs)

1925 N Plaza Blvd, Rapid City, SD 57702  
605-394-1876