



Fathers and Continuous Learning in Child Welfare

Toolkit for Building System Capacity to Engage Fathers and Paternal Relatives in Child Welfare: PEST Worksheet

2023-189

Jill Spielfogel, Candice Talkington, Jenifer Agosti, Amelia Forman, Roseana Bess, and Matthew Stagner

PEST Worksheet¹

Purpose

As teams begin to feel confident about some strategies, they will likely want to share their successes with others. They may want to share information with teams in their office, other offices, across the region, or across the state. The purpose of this worksheet is to help you think about opportunities to spread and share information about effective strategies. The PEST (Positive peer pressure, Existing Structures, and concrete Tools) approach (as described below) can help guide teams as they communicate with other departments, divisions, or community partners).

Some indicators that a strategy is ready to be spread include:

1. Initial tests have shown promise or strategies have been improved based on early results
2. It is part of your team's values and priorities.
3. The practices are documented and will be easy to share. There are champions to support their spread.
4. There is a process in place on who, what, where, when, and how. It could be standardized in trainings, policies, job descriptions, etc.

Instructions

Use the worksheet below to guide your improvement team's plan for spreading strategies to others. It is important to make time to explain to others how the strategy has been working for you (instead of simply passing it along). Walk them through what they will need to know to implement the strategy in detail, and offer to follow up with them to see if they have questions.

PEST communication approach

Positive peer pressure: Sharing your successes with others and encouraging them to try them out.

Existing Structures: Professional development, staff meetings, supervision, observation, hiring, orientation are opportunities to support practice spread and sustainability.

Concrete Tools: Policies, checklists, prompts/scripts, brochures, performance evaluations, visuals, job descriptions, and awards are tools to spread successful strategies.

Positive peer pressure

You are all innovators. Others may be slow to adapt, but over time, more people will come on board. Your excitement about the new practices can be contagious. Creating positive peer pressure is about sharing your excitement instead of pushing an agenda on others. Start with the people who seem most open to trying something different and ask them to try the strategy out! Celebrate others when they try something new, and share stories about successes you see.

¹ The PEST Worksheet was developed by JRA Consulting, Ltd.
For the full toolkit, please visit <https://www.acf.hhs.gov/opre/toolkit/toolkit-building-system-capacity-engage-fathers-and-paternal-relatives-child-welfare>.

Existing Structures

Others will want to understand how work to engage fathers and paternal relatives fits with the work they are currently doing. It is helpful to work within existing structures (such as committees, group supervision, and data collection practices) to integrate the work with existing efforts and practices. Allow time and space for reflection and draw staff in to share resources and provide coaching as needed.

Concrete Tools

As you spread your strategy, it is important to have tools that make it easier for others to use the strategy. For example, if you are working on forms to locate fathers early in the process, it is important to help staff using the form to understand *how* to use the forms. Or, if you are inviting fathers to family-team meetings, consider developing a script that caseworkers can use to get them started in having more open conversations with fathers. As part of coaching, role-play can also help warm people up to new roles and opportunities. Consider whether they will need a checklist that outlines the steps needed to do a new practice.

PEST Worksheet

Strategies to Spread:	
	<i>What might you do in each area to share, teach, spread, and support this strategy?</i>
POSITIVE PEER PRESSURE Positive peer pressure and purposeful interactions	
EXISTING STRUCTURES Using existing structures in the agency, organization, and program	
CONCRETE TOOLS Using concrete tools to support, spread, and sustain the work	

PEST Worksheet (Example)

Strategy to Spread: Use of a mentor at family-team meetings	
	<i>What might you do in each area to share, teach, spread, and support this strategy?</i>
<p>POSITIVE PEER PRESSURE Positive peer pressure and purposeful interactions</p>	<p>At the next office meeting, we will share with other teams in our office how responsive fathers have been when they know there is a father mentor at family-team meetings. We will encourage them to have father mentors who are paid staff attend family-team meetings to support father voice and advocate for their needs. We will ask one person to report back to us at the next meeting about their process using father mentors with one family.</p>
<p>EXISTING STRUCTURES Using existing structures in the agency, organization, or program”</p>	<p>The father mentor group will be notified of all upcoming family-team meetings. They will then coordinate with the caseworker and father to ensure attendance. We will email staff information about the process, and share the names of staff whom they can contact if there are questions.</p>
<p>CONCRETE TOOLS Using concrete tools to support, spread, and sustain the work</p>	<p>The father mentors have clearly documented procedures for contacting fathers before and after a team meeting. The documents will be shared with all staff. Father mentors also debrief the meeting with the caseworker to understand how the father’s voice will be incorporating into case notes or court reports. They document considerations from the debrief using a template that includes follow-up steps.</p>