

Appendix D2-2: Family Impact Questions

In order to incorporate a family perspective in ministry, consider the following regarding the various policies, programs, ministries, ceremonies or services offered by your parish/school:

A CHRISTIAN VISION OF FAMILY LIFE

- Does it acknowledge the family as the domestic church by showing an appreciation of family life as sacred and family activity as holy?
- In what ways does it promote and strengthen family relationships rather than tax the family system?
- Does it encourage families to reach out to other families?
- Does it promote, support, and encourage families to share and grow in faith within the home?

THE FAMILY AS A DEVELOPING SYSTEM

- Does it respond to the various life cycle issues of the participating families? Does it address the special needs of families in transition or crisis?
- Does it assist the individual/family to understand and deal with the influence of their family of origin when appropriate?
- Does it help individuals/families deal with changes that the program may encourage?
- Does it offer skills and build confidence in families so that they might hand on faith traditions and values to their children?

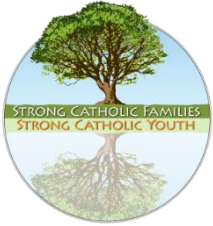
FAMILY DIVERSITY

- Is there a preferred family structure implicit in the program or policy? Does it reward or penalize certain kinds of families?
- Can families of ethnic, racial, or cultural minorities express their differences and richness within the policy/program/ceremony?
- Does it address families with special needs ensuring that respect and consideration are given?

PARTNERSHIP OF FAMILY AND PARISH

- Does publicity and written material about the program or policy reflect that families are partners or does it minimize parent involvement and responsibility?
- Do leaders involve families in the planning, implementation, and evaluation of the program?
- Does it strengthen the family's ability to deal with institutions such as schools, hospitals, government, social service agencies, etc.?
- Does it concretely broaden the choices and options of participating families to lessen stress and not add to it?
- Does the program meet the family's expressed needs and start where they are?

Adapted from *Families at the Center (USCCB)* by the Family Life Apostolate, Archdiocese of New Orleans



Initial Inquiry and Assessment Reflection

Please review the *Strong Catholic Family Information Flyer (Appendix 4)* and complete the following questions individually prior to the meeting with your diocesan consultant.

1. I am interested in *Strong Catholic Families* for our parish/school because...
2. I believe some of the strengths of our parents and families are...
 - a. A success story that illustrates this is...
3. I believe some of the weaknesses of our parents and families are...
 - a. A story that illustrates this is...
4. What has been your greatest success in your parish/school in engaging parents? What made it successful?
5. Imagine you are a typical parent in your parish/school. What would help you deepen your faith?
 - a. What is holding you back?
 - b. What support are you (as a parent) currently getting for helping to grow your family's faith at home? What would you like more of?
6. How and when does parish/school evaluate how well it serves families and young people?
 - a. What have you learned from the evaluations and how have they informed your current efforts?
 - b. If you need more assessment, how and when will you do it?
 - c. How will your parish/school respond if they receive feedback that a program or approach with parents is not working?
7. How well is our parish/school prepared to respond to parents who need help? What do we need in order to become better prepared?

8. On a ten point scale with 1 “not well” and 10 “very well,” how does our leadership respond to angry or disgruntled parents?

The *Strong Catholic Families* process will be only as effective as the level of collaboration and shared vision that supports it within your community. Who absolutely needs to be on board to ensure the success of this collaborative vision and direction? Consider the list below and fill in specific names that come to mind, whether staff or volunteers:

- Catechetical Ministry: _____
- Clergy/Deacons: _____
- Children’s Liturgy of the Word: _____
- Sacramental Ministry Leaders: (Baptism, Reconciliation, Eucharist, Confirmation, Marriage): _____
- Family Life Ministry: _____
- Athletics Ministry: _____
- Catholic School: _____
- PTO President: _____
- Youth Ministry: _____
- Pastoral Ministry: _____
- Pastoral Council: _____
- Finance Council: _____
- Home School Association: _____
- Other: _____

9. Which three families best serve as models for “living faith between the Sundays” that you would hope other families would emulate? Why?

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

10. Are there any potential roadblocks, previous experiences, or leadership issues (i.e., “elephants in the room”) that might undermine the success of this initiative if the community were to move forward at this time? Explain...

11. How might the *SCF* initiative impact your parish/school mission and current priorities? Or be impacted by them?

12. What type of diocesan support do you need as you approach the challenges and opportunities provided through the *Strong Catholic Families* initiative?