

# Language in Family Engaged Research



The 6 **BE's** of language in family engaged research



A guide for researchers when communicating with family partners



Language facilitates communication and enhances the relationship between researchers and family partners



*"The difference between the almost right word and the right word is really a large matter."*

-Mark Twain



## Be clear

- The right words empower, engage, and express gratitude
- Avoid medical jargon and unexplained acronyms
- Be appreciative of the education level of research partners

## Be aware of biases

- Consider inclusive language in partnerships
- Let research partners choose their own title to support roles that are fully encompassing of their expertise and lived experience
- Consider connotations in language, and avoid leading questions



## Be authentic

- Present information in plain language
- Form genuine partnerships, and frequently check-in
- Co-design the project with family partners if possible, and maintain collaboration throughout the entirety of the project

## Be accessible

- Consider what language to speak and what level of language to use
- Ensure body and spoken language are open and positive
- Accommodate differing language abilities such as using sign language, closed capturing, and text-to-talk technology



## Be transparent

- Be upfront about expectations, timelines, impact of research, and next steps
- Provide clear and informed consent
- Consider trauma-informed language and what processes are in place to support family partners

## Be respectful and appreciative

- Use language to build up partners and foster egalitarian partnerships
- One is never 'just a caregiver'
- Recognize level of engagement may fluctuate, but still provide frequent updates to partners
- Use personal touches when expressing gratitude
- Have an open mind and accept constructive feedback
- Recognize contributions are based on lived and professional experience



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