

## Characteristics of Effective Family Advisors

*Effective family advisors:*

- Have credibility with both parents and professionals
- Have their “ears to the ground,” make an effort to reach out to other parents in their community and find out their concerns
- Meet regularly with the organizational leaders to pass along parent concerns, especially those shared by several or many parents
- Have good relationships with the staff in their practice and speak at PFAC meetings at least once each year to voice parent concerns.
- Are able to connect parents with other parents who have shared experiences so they can provide guidance and support
- Provide multiple ways for parents to access information they need and to connect with other parents (for example, a listserv, in-person meetings, or a referral network of parents to talk to)
- Are good at asking for and getting help from other parents, especially in areas where other parents have more expertise
- Encourage initiative and leadership in others, not insisting on being in charge of every area
- Are good at mentoring parents of younger children to help them and bring them into the process of advocating for their child
- Know when to quit and turn their successful participation over to the next energetic group of parent leaders who will maintain the PFAC as a resource for parents and administrators and make it even better