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Introduction

The Northside Achievement Zone (NAZ) is a 501(c)(3) that began in 2003 as the PEACE Foundation, dedicated to building a grassroots movement across race, class and geography toward the common goal of significantly reducing violence in North Minneapolis.

North Minneapolis community organizations and schools began a planning process to develop a comprehensive solution to the negative factors that are faced by Northside residents, which include poverty, unemployment, violence and low education attainment. The result was the formation of NAZ in 2010.

Today, NAZ operates as one integrated program across multiple organizational and school partners, with NAZ families and students at the center. Together we’re building a movement that will shift the culture of North Minneapolis and significantly improve the education and opportunities for children from pre-birth to college.

Mission & Values

NAZ is a collaboration of organizations and schools who work with children and families in North Minneapolis to build a culture of achievement—so that all youth graduate from high school ready for college.

Purpose: Permanently close the achievement gap and end multigenerational poverty within North Minneapolis.

How: Families and children move through a “cradle-to-career” pipeline that provides comprehensive support from pre-natal through college to career.

These values are the foundation of our work with families across the collaborative. NAZ staff and our partner organization’s staff take action on these values every day:

Our Children Will Succeed. We believe that all our children can and will succeed in school, in college, and in life—regardless of family background or past performance in school. Our actions with NAZ children match this belief.
Families are Leaders. Every Northside family has assets and strengths. We believe a culture of achievement can only be built from within the community—one family at a time. We partner with families to set and achieve their goals, and bolster their belief in themselves, and the expectation that their children will go to college.

High Expectations with High Supports. Extremely ambitious expectations are set for NAZ students, families, partner organizations, and staff. The accountability for these outcomes is rigorous—but so are our supports. Every parent and student receives one-on-one support through our “high-touch” process, connecting them with programs and services across our partner organizations. All NAZ partners will support each other in an ongoing continuous improvement process.

Driven by Data. Our resources are dedicated toward measurable outcomes for children and families. Success is gauged by results for children and families, not programs and organizations. NAZ partners work together to build evidence-based solutions that drive measurable improvements with NAZ families. We track the progress of each child toward kindergarten-readiness, grade-level achievement, and college readiness. If the data shows that we are not effective, we will revise our plans until we get it right.

Relationships are the “Work”. We are creating transformative change built on strong relationships. We first work to change ourselves. Then, through our relationships, we invite change among organizations, families, scholars, and systems. Together we increase expectations, break down silos, and build accountability and alignment. We operate under the assumption of good intent in our interactions with each other, especially as we work through difficult issues together.

Collaboration Creates Prosperity. NAZ partners built one system of support for families. This system is made up of many equal partners who are committed to working together for the success of NAZ children, including: parents, organizations, schools, funders, government, and faith institutions. We believe that our collaboration will have more than enough momentum to reach a tipping point of sustainable community transformation and prosperity.

Diversity and Cultural Responsiveness. As we scale up to partner with more than 1,000 families with 2,500 children, we will be reflective of the diversity in our community—while targeting resources where the achievement gap is greatest. The rich diversity of our families is an asset to be woven into our processes and systems of support/service. NAZ staff and partners will embed cultural responsiveness within our work.

Starting Early and Staying Long-Term. We work side by side with families from before birth through college, providing comprehensive support designed to impact a child’s education and life trajectory. We support the success of the whole family.
What is a NAZ Family Achievement Coach, and what is their role within NAZ?

NAZ Family Achievement Coaches partner with North Minneapolis families to illuminate a path to college and bring in support along the way.

*Family Achievement Coaches work side by side with parents to propel NAZ kids effectively through the NAZ solutions to college and beyond.*

As a Family Achievement Coach, you will build trusting relationships, inspire a deep commitment from parents, and solidify the belief that their children will graduate from college. You will work with parents and scholars to identify needs and barriers, set goals, encourage behaviors that support academic outcomes, and connect them with promising and proven strategies to support success.

Family Achievement Coaches support families by:

- Inspiring and reinforcing the belief that college is possible.
- Building an achievement plan for the entire family.
- Supporting action on achievement plan goals for both parents and scholars.
- Connecting to resources to support the achievement plan.
- Recognizing progress families make as they move forward step by step.

A Family Achievement Coach’s role is to partner with the family as a whole and “connect” them to opportunities developed in our NAZ system. You will identify areas of support and offer resources to families. It is not your duty to provide the direct service or solution, but to link parents and their scholars to partner organizations as we move them forward on their path of achievement.

Family Achievement Coaches help families to help themselves by recognizing and building on the assets already within scholars and parents. Achievement Coaches say they “hold a mirror up to families.” By setting goals and connecting with solutions within our NAZ system, families are putting their kids on a path to college—partnering with their Achievement Coach through every step on their journey. At NAZ, we are leaving the work, determination, and process in the hands of our families—supporting self-determination, resilience, and empowering families as experts of their worlds and children.

**Most importantly,** the Family Achievement Coach serves as a peer role model for families. Family Achievement Coaches are not somebody from the outside offering a service. They come from the same community, and in many cases, have experienced the same challenges as NAZ families. Family
Achievement Coaches bring **themselves** to the families and NAZ brings the **system** to make the relationship as effective as it can possibly be.

This Engagement Guide is an overview of what your job entails. The material is based on what NAZ Family Achievement Coaches have done to successfully engage families, and help them take a series of steps that lead to school success for their children and themselves.

NAZ Family Achievement Coaches are instrumental in helping families navigate systems therefore Family Achievement Coaches are co-located (working daily from a partnering organization) within those systems. Family Achievement Coaches are integrated into the culture of our partners to better assist families and scholars as well as increase their knowledge in that system. Working for NAZ and not being located at NAZ requires a high level of attention in building relationships and communicating your professional needs.

Family Achievement Coaches are:

- Trendsetters
- Conduits
- Progress monitors
- Influencers of positive change
- Mentors/ Motivational Coach
- Support persons or Resource Coach
- Information providers

Family Achievement Coaches are not:

- Counselors or therapists
- Direct-service providers
- County workers
- Caseworker/ Social Worker
- Tutors/Academic Counselors
Top NAZ Family Goals

To achieve our goal of all NAZ kids college- and career-ready, NAZ will partner with families to:

1. Develop NAZ Family and Scholar Achievement Plans to create a shared roadmap through NAZ to college. Make sure families believe every day they WILL get there!
2. Involve all NAZ parents in Family Academy to develop the skills, knowledge, and tools to raise kindergarten- and college-ready kids.
3. Ensure pregnant moms and babies receive support for a healthy start.
4. Screen NAZ kids at 3 years to identify learning challenges early.
5. Enroll NAZ 3 and 4 year olds into high quality early learning centers so they start kindergarten ready to learn.
6. Increase NAZ kids learning in reading and math through NAZ academic out-of-school programs.
7. Engage and energize youth in their future college and career opportunities.
8. Monitor the progress of every NAZ child from birth to college and not let anything get in the way!
9. Support family success and remove barriers so children can show up in school ready to learn.
Pillar 1: Building Relationships with Families

Building strong, supportive and appropriate relationships with families is key to their success with NAZ. The role of Family Achievement Coach is an extremely powerful and impactful one, and is crucial to fostering a culture of achievement.

Family Achievement Coaches support outcomes with families through their relationship by:

- Having “been there” yourself through shared life experiences
- Being able to offer opportunities
- Being persuasive about best-practice solutions that support achievement
- Being diligent and pro-active about entering key data in our shared database so that our families’ story (successes, barriers, needs) are mapped out in real-time
- Understanding the Northside culture
- Demonstrating consistency and commitment
- Utilizing Motivational Interviewing and other trained skills to elicit best thinking in families
- Using Expanded Hours policy, being able to connect with families outside of established work hours based on important family meetings, events, or schedule needs.
- Helping families understand challenges and recognize progress through consistently entering and using data in NAZ Connect
- Acting as a role model within the community, both personally and professionally
- Understanding clearly and deeply your role as Family Achievement Coach and NAZ values
- Being another trusted adult in the life of scholars.
- Working with scholars to build on their skills, reinforcing self regulation and executive functioning

Personal and Professional Boundary

Understanding and respecting the fine line between your personal and professional selves is crucial in your work and life. There is no right answer in how we relate to our families; however, remaining ethical, thoughtful, and respectful is key. Your personal and professional boundaries and experiences are constantly mingling; it is very common that Family Achievement Coaches are also neighbors with NAZ families, attend the same church, or have children in the same schools. We ask that Family Achievement Coaches be transparent and clear in this process and use their managers and peers in sorting out challenges as they arise.

*Family Achievement Coaches are always bouncing ideas and questions off of one another. Managers are always there to offer support and a roadmap for families.*
You can’t do the work on the surface. You must go deep.

Self as Family Achievement Coach

You are a Family Achievement Coach because of who you are, what you believe, your lived experiences, and your passion for empowering families. In your work at NAZ, you will be deeply impacted by NAZ families’ stories, successes, hardships and challenges. We honor and respect this - and it is the role of managers, leadership, and peers to support one another in this reality. Weekly one-on-one supervision, staff meetings, and informal access to management staff will be provided to allow you to be your most effective self. Trainings and professional development opportunities are also provided on a regular basis to support your growth as a NAZ Family Achievement Coach. As we foster a culture of achievement in North Minneapolis, we also create one within NAZ.

Use of Supervision

Family Achievement Coaches will receive weekly one-on-one and group-level supervision. At NAZ, we espouse a culture of high supports with high expectations. Family Achievement Coaches are expected to arrive on time to supervision with an agenda, share their challenges, and be receptive to acknowledging both their successes and areas of growth in their workweek. A high-level of accountability will be present throughout your work, including clear expectations around the number and types of interactions with families, completion of profiles and goal planning, and overall use of NAZ Connect in a timely and consistent manner. Managers are expected to coach, train, support and hold Family Achievement Coaches accountable for the process they use to engage families. Family Achievement Coaches can expect their supervision and guidance from managers to mirror the intended partnership with families. Managers will support Family Achievement Coaches in setting and accomplishing professional goals in the ways Family Achievement Coaches will support families.

What is the NAZ “High-Touch” Approach?

NAZ families are successful because Family Achievement Coaches surround them with “high-touch” support at every step in their journey. High-touch support is defined as frequent, strategic, and varied attempts at engaging, interacting, and meeting with families. This is done through phone calls, home visits, and community and school meetings. NAZ expects creativity and sensitivity in how we partner with our families. Assessing the family’s preferred method of engagement, as well as remaining open to the changing needs of each individual family, is key to successful and consistent engagement. Family Achievement Coaches build trusting relationships by removing barriers so that families are continually
NAZ Engagement Guide, July 2016

connected with high-quality supports. This high-touch model is used throughout our process: recruiting, enrolling, goal setting, referring and follow up.

Promise Neighborhoods & Results-Based Accountability

NAZ received a federal Promise Neighborhood designation in late 2011. As a Promise Neighborhood, NAZ is utilizing a framework called “Results-Based Accountability”. This concept is based on:

- Data-driven, transparent decision making
- Starting at the end to determine what you ultimately seek to achieve
- Identifying the appropriate level of accountability: Whole community vs. program or service-level
- Asking effective questions to quickly get from goals to strategies
- Working effectively with partners

In essence, NAZ operates to build results for the entire community, not to just create successful programs.

Accountability Pathway

In order to reach our results, and using our Values as a key guide, NAZ staff, partners, and families need to operate with a high accountability mindset. Everyone involved with the NAZ change process is invited to evaluate their actions using an Accountability Pathway. Consistent with our Relationships Are the Work value, which suggests individuals change themselves before looking to others, this tool can be a guide to removing roadblocks to success and taking effective action.

NAZ Language

For reasons just described, we do not refer to our families as “clients”; we are their partners. It’s important to acknowledge our likeness, and support families as they evolve, grow, and increase their own and their child’s success. NAZ has a unique and intentional vocabulary to reflect this philosophy.
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NAZ Language:

NAZ Family (replaces “client”)

NAZ Scholar (replaces “student,” “child,” “client”)

Partner, Solution, or Opportunity (replaces “service”)

Anchor School = Local schools in partnership with NAZ

NAZ Ecosystem = The partners, opportunities, and solutions all together that help drive change

Achievement Planning (family or scholar) = replacement for traditional “case management” with a more family-focused, outcome-oriented approach

See the Partner Portal for additional definitions of NAZ terms (the password is: Succeed).

Pillar 2: Navigating NAZ Operating Systems

While this Guide contains narrative explanation of what a Family Achievement Coach needs to know for their role, the Partner Portal on the NAZ website includes up-to-date tools and instructions for operating in your role day to day. NAZ leadership recommends Family Achievement Coaches use this Guide to learn their role during training and as reference tool. The Partner Portal is a road map for day-to-day instruction or process reminders that supports Family Achievement Coaches in the “High Tough” approach. The materials on the Partner Portal will be updated regularly to reflect all improvements to NAZ process.
How NAZ Operates

A Systems Approach

NAZ is creating a powerful system of change in North Minneapolis with families and scholars at the center.

NAZ intends for this positive system leading to life success to replace the current status quo that leads more youth to prison and life on the margins than it does to college and life success.

Here’s how NAZ works:

1. *We engage parents in the academic success of their children.* NAZ engages parents with trained family achievement coaches from North Minneapolis who believe college is possible and support parents to raise successful children.

2. *Our results-focused collaborative is building a system of success* that is comprehensive, coordinated, and data-driven. This ecosystem includes:
   - Engaging children through an *Education Pipeline* that provides high-quality learning experiences from birth through graduation (in school and out of school).
   - *Whole Family Support* to stabilize housing, support career growth, and address physical and behavioral health needs—so children come to school ready to learn.

3. *We bring success to scale.* NAZ focuses on individual families, but works at a large scale in North Minneapolis to impact schools, partners, and the neighborhood.
To ensure harmony and alignment in this evolving system, NAZ has built several key tools including “NAZ Connect” data system, and “Pathway Maps” that clarify various pathways to success that families can take.
NAZ Engagement Guide, July 2016

Pathways with Families

While NAZ families create their own customized Achievement Plans, we have developed multiple stepped actions that we know will lead to success, which we call “Pathway Maps.” Pathways are approximately 20 distinct series of steps that occur repeatedly with families at the right time to achieve identified outcomes.

Examples:

- Academic Success Pathway
- Family Academy Enrollment Pathway
- Parent Leadership Pathway

NAZ Connect Data System

The NAZ system of change in North Minneapolis is built on a state of the art data system called NAZ Connect that families use to implement Achievement Plans across multiple partners and schools. This tool will be your day-to-day system for implementing your work with families. Without the use of data on a regular basis, our results-based accountability framework would not be possible.

Standard Operating Procedures

In order to ensure consistency across staff and partners working with NAZ families on these Pathways, we have user-friendly procedures set up on our Partnership Portal (NAZ website for staff and partners), including:

- “Pathway Maps” define the pathways
- NAZ Connect technical guides articulate data system instructions

Pathway Maps are “How To” depictions, and are our user-friendly standard operating procedures across partners that depict flow for how a family or scholar moves through pathways to success.
Use of Pathway Maps

Through pathway maps, Family Achievement Coaches, other NAZ staff, and Partners have a clear roadmap for a variety of high impact strategies to support family and scholar success.

Use of Pathway Maps across organizations supports consistent interactions with families, effective implementation of solutions, and increases fidelity in data.

**Pillar 3: NAZ Connect & the NAZ Ecosystem**

NAZ Connect is an online achievement-planning and data collection system that supports our “high-touch” approach with families. The tool serves three critical functions:

1. Tracks achievement and supports family goals.
2. Supports coordination across the NAZ system of partner organizations.
3. Tracks both family and program data and contributes to a longitudinal data system.
One Set of Family Goals

Families work with their NAZ Engagement Team to develop one set of goals within the NAZ Connect tool—called an Achievement Plan. These Achievement Plans are supported across multiple service providers within the NAZ system. The Engagement Team implements regular progress monitoring through the NAZ Connect system. Through the coordination of the NAZ Connect tool, families, schools, and organizations are now working together at every turn to drive success and provide opportunities, support and solutions to persistent challenges.

NAZ Connect as a Tool for Family Partnership Building and Driving Achievement

Within the tool, Family Achievement Coaches use pre-set, easy to follow interactional processes with the family. These processes include both assessments to uncover family needs or opportunities, and goal planning.

Example: Within the NAZ Connect tool, there is an early childhood assessment that Family Achievement Coaches follow. It includes simple questions to uncover whether a parent is taking specific steps to support early learning. Through the assessment, it may be discovered that a parent is not offering enough language development opportunities. The Family Achievement Coach is prompted to walk the family through concrete goal options, like “Read a minimum of three books a day to my child”.

Assessments and goal plans in the NAZ Connect tool are populated with evidenced-based strategies that help families use specific activities to drive college-readiness outcomes in children.

NAZ Connect as a Coordinating Tool Across Partners

NAZ operates as one integrated system across multiple organizational and school partners with NAZ families at the center. This works because each partner has access to the family’s goals through the NAZ Connect tool, and partners provide solutions as part of a complete continuum of support.

The family’s Achievement Plan—complete with assessment, goals and steps, and identified resources—is shared between programs based on family-driven release of information. This facilitates coordinated services across programs involved with families. Additionally, aggregate and de-identified information is generated through reports to track activities, gaps and progress across all NAZ partners. Key family data is reviewed weekly to inform effective decision-making in real time.
NAZ Engagement Guide, July 2016

Through the NAZ Ecosystem, NAZ can offer support for scholar success:

- Early childhood education to prepare children for kindergarten
- After-school and summer programs that help kids do better in school
- Classes for parents that connect them with a community of support
- Mentors who are strong, positive role models, starting as early as kindergarten
- College prep in high school

And, stability support opportunities for NAZ families who are engaged in their scholars Achievement Plan, including:

- Supporting housing stability
- Employment and career pathways
- Setting a household budget and getting finances under control
- Healthcare and behavioral health

Pillar 4: Team Approach

NAZ builds Scholar-specific teams that involve NAZ and partner staff who are brought into the Scholar’s achievement plan. The NAZ Connect system allows for this kind of customized planning across the various organizations involved. As a Family Achievement Coach, you will often play a key role in many different teams supporting Scholars in many of your families. It is important to recognize your expertise will be in how to connect with the parent to support their scholar and how you access resources to empower the whole family toward achievement.
Team Approach Example: Anthonie’s Story

Anthonie, an 8 year-old African American boy, was placed in Level 4 special education and suspended from his OST program due to behavior. NAZ pulled an entire team together to support him, Team Anthonie. The team quickly identified behavioral health as a barrier to his learning. Through behavioral health counseling, it was discovered that anxiety is the cause of his problems at school. With Team Anthony—a whole community of support—today he’s moved to Level 1 special education, returned to his OST program, and set his own academic goals. After a really hard day at school, his Family Achievement Coach asked if anything positive happened. He said, “Well, I found out today that I love to learn”.

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**Diagram:**
MOM & FAMILY

- NAZ Connector
- NorthPoint Counselor
- Behavioral Health Navigator
- Big Brother Mentor
- Harvest Prep School
- PCYC After School & Summer
- Academic Navigator
Recruiting & Enrolling Families into NAZ

Pillar 5: Recruiting Families

Part of the NAZ Family Achievement Coach’s role is to recruit new families that live within North Minneapolis, Anchor Schools, and/or participate in Anchor Partner programs. Introducing yourself and the NAZ process requires a skillful approach. In your engagement with families, you become a “trendsetter” encouraging new families to participate in NAZ and facilitating the culture of achievement to take root.

Key to your success in reaching new families:

- Be thoughtful and intentional and work to understand the unique experiences of the family/person in front of you.
- Remain flexible in your interactions, and keep trying new strategies with a family until you find something that works.
- Remember that parents want what’s best for their children, regardless of their situation.
- Trust our belief that all NAZ scholars WILL succeed. This may be a new belief you are helping instill with a family. This belief is the cornerstone of our change process.

How are Families Enrolled?

While NAZ has door-knocked and recruited broadly in the past, we are now focused on aligning our involvement with families who attend Anchor Schools or are actively working with our Anchor Partners. Here’s how:

1. Anchor Schools identify families for enrollment
2. Anchor Partners who are participating in the integrated team approach (such as have co-located staff) identify their participating families to enroll into NAZ

NAZ Recruitment Scripts

In order to ensure consistent and compelling messaging with families to recruit them into NAZ and/or to invite them to participate in NAZ opportunities, NAZ develops talking points (or scripts) with specific direction on recruiting for different scenarios. Scripts are designed as important guidelines to engage
families, but they are not meant to be read to a family. It is important that you become familiar with the scripts, and put the ideas into your own words so that you can be natural with families.

Family Achievement Coaches will be supported and encouraged to develop their unique style and voice in their partnerships with families while also remaining consistent with the NAZ system and values. In interactions with families, scripts are helpful in articulating points and fostering engagement and follow through. NAZ has created a unique formula to support your work. *Repeated invitations are often needed over the phone or at the door to enroll new families.*

Each script contains:

1. **Inspiring first statement:** NAZ is working to make sure all of our children living in North Minneapolis graduate from college.
2. **Compelling reason it matters to family:** If you decide to join NAZ, you and your children will be supported by a village of people and programs, such as housing and career support for the adults in the household and help with school for your children. And a NAZ Family Achievement Coach like me will support you and your family at every step with resources including programs providing whole family and academic support for your kids.
3. **Logistics and incentives:** When you enroll into NAZ and complete a process of setting up your family profile in our online system, you’ll receive a gift card!
4. **Invitational statement:** What are your thoughts about signing up and setting your child on a path to college today?

Scripts will be available for specific Pathways with families, and will be found on the Partnership Portal.
Enrolling Families after Recruitment

Follow the checklist to guide you through the enrollment process. Enrolling a family consists of these basic steps:

- Confirm that the family lives in North Minneapolis
- Sign an initial consent form
- Review orientation materials with the family and “inspiring them” with the NAZ vision
- Complete initial “profile” information on the head of household and setting up the household
- Work with family to make the College Bound Commitment
- Enter academic information in NAZ Connect for all scholars and completing the Matrix ROI to kick off Achievement Planning

Initial Consent form and Matrix Release of Information (ROI)

NAZ requires that two distinct documents get signed for participating families:

1. The Initial Consent Form signed at the beginning of enrollment by each adult in the household, and
2. The NAZ Connect “Matrix Release of Information” (ROI) that is signed annually for each individual, and signed each time a new organization gets brought into an individual’s Achievement Plan.

It is imperative that families be fully informed of their rights to consent to share information with partners and other service providers.

Why are the Initial Consent Form and Matrix Release of Information Needed?

The Initial Consent Form is crucial in tracking family and scholar data. The form is signed during the recruitment to enrollment process for all family members and provides consent to store data in our web based tool, NAZ Connect, and to share data with our evaluators. It is vital that this form be signed prior to beginning data collection.

The Matrix Release of Information is a more interactive process, as it is embedded into their NAZ Connect Achievement Plan. An initial ROI is implemented with the family for each child in the household during the recruitment to enrollment process. It is what allows staff of NAZ and partners to put data into the system and to communicate with each other to support a parent or scholar. It provides families with the power and decision-making around “if, how, and what” information that they’ve
shared with NAZ can be shared with our partnering agencies. Should the ROI expire, access to resources, partners and services is immediately limited. It is imperative that Family Achievement Coaches assist families in keeping this important information updated.

Confidentiality

Information that families share with NAZ is confidential, and as a Family Achievement Coach, we are expected to respect this right. Failure to do so will result in disciplinary action and/or possible termination. Under no circumstances can NAZ staff share information with other agencies, individuals, and systems if a current Release of Information has not been completed. All ROIs have an expiration date of one year from the date signed by the family. To ensure continuous supports, staff must track the need for continued contact with the service provider and update ROIs with the family as they come up for renewal. There is a widget in NAZ Connect as well as a report in iZenda to support you with this.

Respecting the privacy of our families is a basic value and expectation of NAZ therefore Family Achievement Coaches are not authorized to view family or scholar profiles in the NAZ Connect database or paper files if they are not assigned to that family’s team. Viewing a family or scholar profile for any purpose other than providing support, assisting with achievement planning or direction from your manager can and will be punishable up to termination. Caution shall also be taken to ensure that unauthorized individuals do not overhear any discussion of confidential information and that documents containing confidential information are not left in the open or inadvertently shared.

Review Orientation Material

In your first meetings with a recruited family, you will explain NAZ to them using the NAZ toolkit. It is important that you go through all of the key elements of NAZ so a potential family understands the benefit and the commitment they are making. There is also an Orientation Protocol document available on the Partnership Portal for additional support.
NAZ Engagement Guide, July 2016

Complete Initial Profile

You will then walk a family through a series of questions on the Enrollment Tab. It is important that you frame your inquiries with the family so they understand we are creating a profile of their household in our data system so we can create the best possible Achievement Plan that will lead to success for each member of the family. Once you have entered the information for the head of household, you will set up records for all other household members.

Secure Parent Commitment to College Path for Scholars

You will work with each enrolling family to help them set their College-Bound Commitment. This process is critical to their involvement with NAZ. Marking their goal for their children through a commitment process is a powerful tool in setting their Achievement Plan. This commitment should be brought up throughout their journey to remind them of their long-term goal, and your willingness to partner with them along the way.

Academic data and Matric ROI Configuration

Finally, you will gather academic information about each scholar in the household and complete the age-appropriate tab and school enrollment/placement sub tab (Early Childhood or K-12). The information you gather here will be your jumping off point for Achievement Planning. Lastly, keeping in mind all the data you have gathered, you will set up the Matrix ROI for each household member.

Next Steps:

1. Welcome the new NAZ family and set up a time to meet again.
2. Give each family an age-appropriate book or activity and encourage them to read with their children.
3. After the family profile is complete, present the parents with a gift card in the amount identified in the Process Map. Your manager will have these on hand.
4. Give them your contact information.
5. Set up a time to work on Achievement Planning. This next meeting should be as soon as possible to ensure engagement and continuity of work.
Ongoing Work with Families

Pillar 6: Achievement Planning

➢ Pathway Map: Academic Success Pathway

After a family is enrolled and completes the enrollment process, the next step is to build and take action on an Achievement Plan.

What is an Achievement Plan?
Many families have not implemented goal setting in useful ways before joining NAZ. As a Family Achievement Coach, you’ll give families the guidance they need to set and achieve goals. You will both guide parents and scholars toward goals, and listen to them -- working as partners to identify important goal areas that will stabilize everything from the household to test scores, setting them both on a path to success.

Family goals are within their “Achievement Plans,” housed within the NAZ Connect tool, so that our partners can access these goals and support them seamlessly.

With your help, families develop their own goals and are held responsible for whether or not they work towards accomplishing them. Your role is to open doors for them to accomplish these goals, and to provide encouragement along their journey.

Each family should set an Achievement Plan with goals within two weeks of enrollment into NAZ. The establishment of goals is crucial in the tracking of our partnerships with families. Everything that we do with families is a data point within NAZ Connect. That is, goals allows for our work with families to be noted, tracked, and acknowledged as we continue to partner with families in fostering a culture of achievement.

Initial Achievement Planning Session

Family Achievement Coach should schedule an one hour appointment to meet with parents face to face to create an Achievement Plan within NAZ Connect. This process may take longer than one hour based on family size, needs, distractions, and parent questions and concerns, so plan accordingly.

This meeting is an information exchange – families can interview the Family Achievement Coach as much as they are being interviewed. Family Achievement Coaches are expected to be mindful of
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information that is appropriate to disclose, respect each family’s right to their own information, and to use their one-on-one meetings with their managers to navigate instances that provide challenges.

Examples of appropriate disclosures made to families by Family Achievement Coaches:

- General family information
- General family of origin information
- Work history
- Neighborhood connections

Examples of inappropriate disclosures made to families by Family Achievement Coaches:

- Financial disclosures or exchanges
- Sharing intimate information about past and current romantic relationships
- Present use of drugs or alcohol
- Mental health issues
- Any illegal activity

Common curiosities of families often include if the Family Achievement Coaches are parents, where they live, who their family is, and other information about their upbringing and social lives. Each Family Achievement Coach is expected to consider what feels most comfortable to share and discuss this with their manager first. This process in individual supervision will be ongoing, as life experiences change and partnerships with families evolve over time.

Additionally, it is never appropriate, under any circumstances, for Family Achievement Coaches to exchange goods or services, either through trade or cash, with their NAZ families.

The basic steps of initial Achievement Planning depicted in the Academic Success Pathway Map:

- Review and update Education Tabs for Scholars in the home (Early Childhood or K-12)
- Set up Early Childhood or K-12 Checklist Goal and steps to identify key action
- Focus on current High Priority Actions in supporting goal and step selection
- Make Connection to relevant opportunities that support goals
- Action Steps – print Goal Plan as action steps that include partner information
- Set time to follow up and support action
It’s important to understand that goal setting is central to the support you provide. Family Achievement Coaches work with parents to set initial goals and open doors to services, remove barriers and encourage families to achieve these goals. Goals allow a map to track positive progress, identify continued areas for growth and opportunity, and ensure that families have measureable milestones to mark their growth. Additionally, goals allow for the tracking of achievement and support outcomes for continued services and funding.

Goal creation and achievement is a constant process throughout a family’s engagement with NAZ. Supports provided to families by our partners are also monitored and tracked through NAZ Connect to help us track inputs and outcomes. After goals are accomplished, Family Achievement Coaches will inspire the family to set and achieve new goals. Speaking directly to goals as ongoing tools that determine and direct the partnership between the Family Achievement Coach and the family is a crucial component of the Achievement Planning work.

After setting goals, help take immediate action on at least one goal while the family is in the office. For example:

- Connect families with resources from our partners – and actually place the call to a service provider on the spot.
- Make an appointment with the partner organization for service at a time that you can join the family (e.g. housing).
- Help fill out paperwork (e.g. to apply for a mentor).

If you don’t know of any solutions, let families know of avenues you will take to help them find a solution (e.g. contact partner organizations, other Family Achievement Coaches, other sources).

When do I use which Goal Plan?

There are three goal plans in NAZ Connect related to Academic Success: Academic Success – Family, Academic Success – Scholar, and Academic Success – Early Childhood. Parents work with their Family Achievement Coach to build age-appropriate, education-focused goals for their scholars. The goal plan provides parents with a concrete, tangible tool to guide their scholar’s success. Family Achievement Coaches continually update these documents as families’ progress through their goals. Scholars will also work with their Family Achievement Coach to build their own goal plan.

Parents and scholars work one on one with their NAZ Family Achievement Coach to develop action steps that work best for them to achieve these goals. Strategies range from attending a parent-teacher conference, to signing up for after-school programming, developing a homework routine at home, and
more. NAZ Family Achievement Coaches work with our partner organizations to ensure families have
the resources they need to follow through. As the parents check off tasks they complete, their NAZ
Family Achievement Coach helps them to plan next steps.

The many goals and steps on the Academic Success Goal Plans serve as a reminder that there are things
every family can do to improve their child’s education, regardless of personal circumstances.

Make Connection to High Priority or Other Relevant Opportunities

Explain that NAZ surrounds families with the support from over 50 organizations in our Ecosystem.

As Family Achievement Coaches begin to work with families, resources around mentoring, after school
activities, behavioral health and early childhood are readily available to support academic achievement
for their children. After three months of demonstrated commitment, parents can work with their Family
Achievement Coach to access support for the whole family, including housing support. Framing this to
families in way of their demonstrated commitment and engagement to this process is key to their
understanding. Family Achievement Coaches are encouraged to work with their managers in this
messaging when this becomes challenging, and continually develop this skillful art of engagement.

Action Steps and Follow Up

After setting up an Achievement Plan with a family, help them see the plan as their roadmap for success
in reaching their end goal of college for their children. Print the plan with updates at their initial meeting
and every follow up meeting so that they have these action steps at home and can be reminded to make
progress on them. Set up a plan with each family for follow up. You can offer to call them weekly and
ask how their goals are progressing. Or, set up a time for a follow up in-person meeting or home visit.
Texting is another option for reminding families about their goals, but should not replace verbal
conversations.

Caution: A number of families who enroll are in crisis mode and need immediate
help. Be careful not to make promises at this stage, but focus on how we can work
with them to prepare their child for college over the long term. The meeting of basic
needs (food and diapers) as well as housing are common requests at first contact with
families. If requests arise, please talk to your manager about how to respond.
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Driving Achievement – Setting Solutions in Motion with Families

➢ Pathway Map: Academic Success

You’ll come to find that the process of Achievement Planning is an ongoing loop of:

1. Reviewing where a family is at in their goals
2. Highlighting progress and areas of success
3. Updating or reviewing profile information with new data
4. Continually tapping into and strengthening their belief in the college path
5. Setting new goals or steps
6. Bringing new opportunities to a family’s attention
7. Identifying new and evolving ways of supporting Scholar achievement or whole family success.

“You are never too old to set another goal or to dream a new dream.”

— C.S. Lewis

By helping families move through these steps over time, you are supporting their own “results-based accountability” process.

Helena’s Story

Helena’s story is an example of how the checklist is used in close collaboration between parents and NAZ Family Achievement Coaches to improve educational outcomes.

Helena was active in her five-year-old daughter’s academic life before she developed an Education Goal Plan with the help of her NAZ Family Achievement Coaches. Now armed with the goal plan, Helena approaches her daughter’s teacher differently. She used to ask how her child was doing generally, but now she asks specific, probing questions: “What areas are challenges for Learic? How can I help her improve in those areas? When will we check in next about her progress?”

Helena says the goal plan, “Lets me know what else I need to do, and I feel accomplished when I can check things off.” Through better parent/teacher communication, Helena understands how to
support Learic’s success at school, particularly in terms of behavior. As a result of an increased focus on behavior at home, Learic’s teacher reports that her behavior has improved at school.

Helena has also taken steps to improve in the areas of her checklist that don’t come as easily. It’s difficult to “build a culture of achievement at home” because Helena works long hours. Despite these challenges, Helena is sure to check Learic’s backpack, read to her, and complete activities recommended by Learic’s teacher.

**Pillar 7: Family Academy: Joining With Families in Building Skills and Knowledge to Support Scholar Success**

- Pathway Maps: Family Academy Enrollment and Family Academy Participation

While the Family Achievement Coach role is the day-to-day change lever for families, Family Academy classes are designed for accelerating parent learning on key aspects of raising a college-ready scholar. These curriculum offerings are evidence-based and customized through intensive engagement between the University of Minnesota and NAZ staff, including participation from Family Achievement Coaches and families.

**Curricula Offerings**

1. Foundations – Empowerment training
2. College Bound Babies – For parents of birth to 3 year olds
3. Ready to Succeed – For Parents of 4 and 5 year olds before starting kindergarten
4. College Bound Scholars – For elementary and middle school levels

Participation in Family Academy will likely have HIGH impact on parent ability to support scholar success. For example, 77% of parent graduates of College Bound Babies were proficient at the end of the class compared to 24% who were in the control group.

A key aspect of the Family Achievement Coach role is to influence families’ likelihood of attending relevant Family Academy classes, and to help them integrate the learning ongoing. All Family Achievement Coaches participate in the Foundations class upon getting hired, and are encouraged to participate in the age-specific offerings to have the same knowledge parents are gaining.
Family Academy classes can be viewed as a learning community and judgment-free space where parents and/or caregivers can be open about areas of growth related to their scholar. The groups are guided by a trained facilitator and are meant to be interactive and meet participants where they are. Family Academy groups are called classes because participants are enrolled and expected to attend there after, however it’s important to make sure your families understand that Family Academy is not school.

**Ecosystem in Action: Supporting Family Stability**

As part of the Achievement Planning process, you may begin to hear about stability challenges, such as housing crises, financial issues, or behavioral health challenges. The Family Achievement Coach role is NOT to address these areas directly. You are the guide and support lever to ensure the family gets connected and follows through with supports from the Ecosystem.

➢ Pathway Map: Family Support Success

It is important that the Family Achievement Coach keeps their primary focus on Achievement Planning for Scholars. When a need arises for family stability support, a Family Achievement Coach should follow the relevant process map for using the Ecosystem for the identified area. NAZ Navigators in each area are your content expert partners for identifying supports. The Family Achievement Coach ongoing role in supporting stability is to follow the Navigator or identified partner’s lead in implementing the team approach. Your peer-to-peer coaching role is a critical voice for the family in following through with stability plans (housed in NAZ Connect when possible).

**Supporting Accountability and Behavior Change Related to Family Stability**

While there are systemic barriers that often block family success in areas like housing and employment, at times, families’ own actions may also become barriers to success. Families may have best intentions in their progress goals, but may still fall back on behavior patterns developed often through generational poverty that may not support their progress. NAZ is working at a systems-change level to address barriers to success, and we need Family Achievement Coaches to work at an individual level with their families.
Responding to Needs

Throughout our work with families, they are faced with challenges and concerns that create needs. Understanding the immediacy of these needs and the Family Achievement Coach’s role in addressing them is a key component of our partnerships with families.

Family Achievement Coaches are constantly faced with the urgency of families’ needs. It is important that Family Achievement Coaches remain constantly mindful of the fact that it is not their task to resolve the needs, but that it is their task to connect families to partner collaborations and resources in an attempt to resolve needs. Common emergent needs often include housing, safety, food, and other basic needs. In times of dilemma, the Family Achievement Coach is encouraged to seek support from Lead Family Achievement Coaches and Program Managers.

Immediate Needs

There may be cases where a family simply needs basic needs met like milk, soap, or bus fare. Understand what NAZ’s rules and regulations are pertaining to how you handle these situations. Resources are available both through NAZ Connect and your NAZ Managers. Bus tokens are also available on a limited basis for NAZ goal-related activities.

Family Rejects Supports

How should you respond when a family rejects a “pull” to take action on setting a goal or linking to a solution? Remember, the family is in control of their own process. (See section on Motivational Interviewing)

1. Help them to own their process by reminding them that they are in control and they drive the process. They are the ones doing the work; the NAZ Family Achievement Coach walks beside them.

2. Be persistent and know when to push and use your instincts to know when not to push. Family engagement is a delicate dance, and when you are out of step, take a break, ask for support from your manager, and work to time your moves with those of your NAZ family.

3. Check in with the family as much as needed and NEVER GIVE UP on a family. Be willing to do whatever it takes to be committed to them.

4. If a family and a Family Achievement Coach are having a hard time working together for any reason, seek advice of your manager or director to help with the situation.
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5. Be mindful that your families are in different places. Observe the situation and interpret what you observe.

*It is better to say, “I don’t know about that, but let us start to network and see what we can do to start to solve some of the things you are going through.”*

**Family is angry or unreasonable**

- Give them back their ownership of their own goals.
- Ask permission (“May I give you some feedback?”) so they own the message.
- Use de-escalation skills.

**Family rejects or resists a program, or service because of prior unsuccessful contact**

Some resistance from families is natural.

- Roll with the resistance, it is a natural and protective process.
- Remember to not assume anything about a family or their situation.
- Understand that families may have been “burned” before by many different programs and many different systems and they haven’t gotten results.
- Let the family express and explain their frustrations with prior programs or services or their own situations.
- Emphasize that NAZ has partnerships with agencies. Because programs are connected through and approved by NAZ, doors will open a bit easier.

Do your best in finding other ways of helping families. If you don’t have the answer, ask partner organizations if they can help or guide you to other resources or opportunities.

Family Achievement Coaches are encouraged to acknowledge the limits of their reach. Validating and respecting a family’s frustration is integral to the change process, while also remaining mindful of not being pulled into the conflict more deeply. Align yourself with the family by using statements such as:

- “We can work through this together.”
- “What might we be missing in figuring out what else is needed?”
- “What have you done in the past to overcome similar challenges? Who have you turned to? What have you felt and experienced to get through it?”
Family Achievement Coaches are encouraged to make statements such as:

- “I am not so sure about that, I will have to look into it.”
- “Wow. I will have to think about that and get back to you. Can I call you later today or stop by tomorrow to provide you with some resources?”

Responding to Serious Family Situations

Parents and children are faced at times with situations that impact their overall safety and stability. Examples include addiction, domestic violence, and harm to self or others. It’s imperative that all Family Achievement Coaches inform their immediate manager the moment they’re informed or made aware of the situation.

The Family Achievement Coach role is not set up to intervene in crisis situations. Your role is to notice the crisis and bring in your manager immediately. Likely, the Behavioral Health Navigator will get involved to bring in their expertise.
Using Data to Drive Results

NAZ is a results-driven organization, committed to using evidence-based practice and continuously improving what we do based on how families succeed. As a Family Achievement Coach, you are at the foundation of our results process. You are working with families every day, putting real-time data into NAZ Connect about the steps families are taking and results that come from those steps. This data will be part of a larger picture of academic and program data for the Scholars enrolled in NAZ. The data you collect from families will help us continually improve our solutions with families. The other data collected from academic and program sources will help you inform parents about how their Scholar is performing academically. It will also help them tie success to the action steps they have already taken.

Results-Based Accountability

As a Promise Neighborhood, NAZ is part of a national “Results-Based Accountability” (RBA) movement. The key principles of RBA include:

- Data-driven, transparent decision-making
- Start at the end to determine what you ultimately seek to achieve
- Identify the appropriate level of accountability:
  - Population or whole community
  - Team, Solution or Program
- Ask effective questions to quickly get from ends to strategies
- Work effectively with partners

The RBA process involves population-level accountability and performance-level accountability. For NAZ, our population is North Minneapolis families with children under age 18. Our performance is the NAZ staff and program solutions implemented with enrolled families. With this dual vision, we can tie efforts to results.

NAZ’s Data System – An On-the-Ground Results Based Accountability Process

Here’s how NAZ uses performance data (staff and programs working with families) to drive population-level results across our community:
EVALUATION FRAMEWORK

POPULATION-LEVEL DATA & AGGREGATE PERFORMANCE DATA

Data:
- MCAs & BKAs from MPS & non-district partner schools
- Community-wide survey every other year
- MCAs, MAPs & BKAs at an identified level with a release of information
- Other administrative data

Wilder Research is building a longitudinal database that tracks community-wide data over time; reports annually to DOE on mandated indicators

POPULATION-LEVEL RESULTS

Reaching Long-Term Benchmarks:
- 80% Kindergarten-Ready
- 75% Third Grade Reading Proficiency
- 70% Eighth Grade Math Proficiency
- 80% Graduation Rate

NAZ scholar outcomes drive results for the community

NAZ-Enrolled Scholars = Receiving NAZ Solutions

BASELINE
- 28% Kindergarten-Ready
- 16% Third Grade Reading Proficiency
- 29% Eighth Grade Math Proficiency
- 51% Graduation Rate

INDIVIDUAL- AND PROGRAM-LEVEL DATA

Frequent analysis at an individual level; ongoing use of data to improve NAZ solutions.

All individual-level data is tracked in the NAZ Connect system.

NAZ Solutions are defined in evidence-based plans and monitored for improvement, using data, with support from Wilder Research.
Performance Targets

As a NAZ Family Achievement Coach, you are a performance asset for your families’ success. As you work with approximately 30 NAZ families ongoing, you will begin to have performance targets to help drive your work with families. Your performance targets could be as basic as the number of families you need to call in a week to tell about a new opportunity. They could also be more robust, such as needing to convince five parents who have been identified by leadership to enroll their Scholars into an expanded learning program.

Planning your day based on performance targets will ensure that you have met the needs of your families and the organization. Family Achievement Coaches have supports in place to assist them in reaching their performance targets such as Google calendar, NAZ Connect built in reminders and consultation with NAZ staff in behavioral health, housing, career and finance as well as daily access to your manager.

Family Data

NAZ continues to build its capacity to inform parents and Scholars of the data that can help them drive their decisions and reinforce progress. Your Program Manager will train you on any emerging tools within NAZ Connect that can be ways to communicate data to families.
**Skills and Strategies**

**Empowerment Skills**

Family Academy Foundations training is rooted in the personal empowerment curriculum framework that was developed by Twin Cities Rise for use in its successful job seeking and job keeping programming. NAZ has translated the curriculum to fit its mission of creating a culture of achievement on the Northside. Specifically, the training will seek to positively impact parents (who are also neighbors) to:

1. Build self-awareness and self-confidence to undergird the belief that kids from the Northside can succeed in school and attend college.
2. Instill motivation and commitment to achieve, both with whole-family success goals and student academic progress.
3. Build social skills that will lead to effective navigation of opportunities for supporting success.

These three areas will provide a foundation for families to effectively utilize the opportunities in the NAZ pipeline to move forward their own families’ achievement plan.

**Interviewing and Coaching Skills**

**Motivational interviewing – a Key Tool for Family Achievement Coaches**

One of the main outcomes for including Motivational Interviewing (MI) within Family Achievement Coach training is that it will assist Family Achievement Coaches with incorporating change with their families. MI will help Family Achievement Coaches to identify, examine and resolve a Parent’s ambivalence towards change. Ambivalence can be defined as a Parent’s simultaneous attraction and repulsion of his/her intrinsic needs collaborating with their NAZ program goal(s). For example, “I want to be a part of NAZ, but I have been a part of programs like this before and they never worked.” Techniques in Motivational Interviewing such as asking questions can be used to uncover and support each individual’s change process.

As noted in the NAZ pipeline of Family Engagement, Family Achievement Coaches will be working side by side with Parents developing trusting relationships. MI is an important tool that will initiate the change needed for Parents to believe their children will graduate from college.
Through training, Family Achievement Coaches will learn three main elements of MI: **Collaboration**, **Evocation** and **Autonomy**.

- **Collaboration** will encourage partnership and discourage confronting behaviors, on both sides.
- **Evocation** will enable the Parent to look within for ideas and solutions, while dissuading the Family Achievement Coach from imposing his/her own ideas and motivations.
- **Autonomy** will empower the Parent to be more self-directed and not dependent on the Family Achievement Coach for change opportunities.

The Family Achievement Coach will see that by incorporating the above techniques, a true partnership will develop with their NAZ families. The Family Achievement Coach will begin to draw out the thoughts and experiences of the Parent in ways that will not shame or control the Parent. Instead the Parent will learn that true change is within and they will be held accountable for follow through on all actions. Another great benefit of these techniques is that Parents will not only identify problems, but will be encouraged to participate with their Family Achievement Coach in ongoing solution-based dialogue. The benefit to the Family Achievement Coach is that he/she will learn when to lead or follow in the ‘dance’. Most importantly, the Family Achievement Coach will participate in behaviors that will influence modeling and trust within the family to assist Parents in removing/preventing academic barriers for their children.

The links below provide specific examples of motivational interviewing:

- [http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8xhQmPZyc4](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8xhQmPZyc4)

Knowing how to pace the work, get the timing right for when to say something, and the content right for what/how to say it. Remember that each parent and child will go at their own pace. Some people are procrastinators and need more pushing or motivating. Family Achievement Coaches should ask questions around each family’s goals. If there are excuses around why they didn’t work on the goal, work towards solutions that take the excuses away. Take baby steps, but action steps toward the goal.

**Balancing the push and the pull**

- Pull: Being in front of people helping them make decisions
- Push: Also being behind them, supporting them to follow up on decisions already made
Pacing

Each “I can” leaves a residue of empowerment to stand on in the next situation – build them intentionally:

- Design goals to stage successes more easily and quickly. Start with three small, realistic achievable goals, then grow to larger, more ambitious goals.
- Celebrate accomplishment of goals, no matter how small
- Helps cement family’s commitment to NAZ
- Family’s own and account for their goals – the celebration of accomplishments will be easier afterwards
- Use families’ own language to elicit goals and solutions from families (rather than providing them)
- OARS – Observation, Affirmation, Reflection, & Summary
- Active listening
- Always ask questions – be an active listener. Let the family member provide answers, while you help them figure out how to get to the answer. Always reference the family’s goals.
- Connect back to families’ own goals
- The work always rides on relationships and the teamwork between Family Achievement Coaches

Building Relationship and Partnership with Families

Partnering with Families

The success of the family can depend on how much they participate and work with the Family Achievement Coach. The Family Achievement Coach -family relationship is a “walk alongside” concept. The Family Achievement Coach has to be flexible in meeting families where they are in the process. Remain constant and persistent. You will experience challenges such as pushback from families, while you are trying to pull them ahead. However, continue to be supportive and encouraging.
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Timing

Meet at least twice monthly with regular and frequent phone contact as well. The number of times Family Achievement Coaches meet with families depends on a number of factors. Families’ needs change regularly, and the Family Achievement Coach should seek support from his/her manager in determining how often to meet with families. Some families interact with their Family Achievement Coach multiple times a week over the phone, in the home, and in the community. Other families interact weekly, monthly, or on an as-needed basis. Best practice is to meet and connect with the family at least two times a month.

Action Needed

Let families explain and tell, assume nothing, and be teachable.

● Always ask questions and be an active listener - let them provide the answers.
● The Family Achievement Coach can help guide them to arrive at the answer.
● Elicit and support parent’s goals (follow their lead) - Families/parents identify goals they want to work on and take ownership of them.
● Reinforce their goals.
● Encourage and be persistent.
● Provide access to resources and break down any barriers to achievement.
● Follow-through with families regarding goal progress.
● Hold them accountable for work towards goals.
● Push them to work harder on goals if necessary.
● Provide ongoing, consistent check-ins about progress.
● Reinforce what is working in the families’ lives.
● By exposing them to opportunities and resources that align with their goals, families begin to take control of their own lives.
● You will hold parents accountable by checking-in by phone or home visits, to find out how they are progressing.
● Be sure to build trust by always following through on your commitments to families.
● Remind parents about the goals they’ve set, connect these goals to outcomes, and give a push if families need to work harder on goals.
● Family Achievement Coaches are encouraging, always supportive, and looking for any obstacles that may be hindering progress.
● Understand the obstacles they face and know what can be done for them.
● Family Achievement Coaches help parents to realize their own value.
Ability to be Firm and Hold Yourself and Our Families Accountable

It is our responsibility as Family Achievement Coaches to make overt that which is covert. That is, it is important that we acknowledge what we observe in the environment directly and respectfully to our families. We do not hold secrets for families; instead, we create open and safe dialogue around our authentic concern for the family. For example, repeated observations of recycling bins filled with beer cans, the stray marijuana joint on the table, high levels of traffic in the home, unsafe living environments for children, harm to self or others, or other observations and concerns for the wellbeing of all members of the family. In the event that this is occurring, it is the Family Achievement Coach’s responsibility to discuss this with their manager immediately and make decisions around next steps for visits.

*Remember to celebrate the accomplishment of goals, no matter how small they may seem.*

When this occurs, Family Achievement Coaches respond by:

- Letting family members know about negative observable things in their environment that cannot be ignored (example: any dangers to children, abuse of children, beer bottles in the yard, or drugs on the table).
- Being understanding yet frank about potential consequences if you are continuously exposed (reporting to authorities).
- Identifying the need to report what they see in the environment that is a potential detriment to the child and progress of the family.
- Being understanding, but not an investigator.
- Being a “pattern recognizer” offering concern and support at the appropriate time.

The Family Achievement Coach must be dedicated to doing a lot of following-up, a lot of calling, and a lot of pushing. The families or individuals you are working with are not used to figuring out how to get out of the situations and systems they function in because that’s been their norm for so long.

The NAZ Family Achievement Coach is not a social worker, but a community member that supports, guides and navigates families through systems and services. NAZ Family Achievement Coaches are seen by the people they serve as equals and neighbors.

A NAZ Family Achievement Coach helps a family to find strength and power within themselves to change their situations—the potential is already there. NAZ families OWN THEIR OWN PROCESS.
Action needed

1. Don’t make promises that can’t be kept. Families are looking for genuine help. Be honest and clear about what NAZ can and cannot do. Giving them false hope is not productive.
2. Show up on time and don’t cancel appointments.
3. Do what you say you are going to do.
4. Check in with families at least twice per month.
5. Commit to partnering with each family.
6. Be open and honest.
7. Take action on their goals.
8. Make sure families are part of the problem-solving process, and this is a discussion. Remember that families have experienced barriers with other organizations and may have been disqualified from services, or put on long waiting lists.
9. Be available and accessible.

Families will trust the process more when:

1. NAZ Family Achievement Coaches describe the difference between being a NAZ family, and a family seeking out an organization on their own for help. The difference is that NAZ families have the support of Family Achievement Coaches who follow-up with partner organizations, which is key.
2. Appointments are made immediately with partner organizations that meet their needs. This shows families that Family Achievement Coaches can deliver.
3. Families receive timely follow-up or service.
4. Families will trust they will receive future service because of the help they got initially from partner organizations.
Home Visiting

Home visiting is a powerful tool in family engagement. Meeting the family in their natural environment allows for real-time observations and experiences of family life. It offers richness in way of enhancing engagement, meeting the family as they are, and the observation of the type and quality of family interactions.

It’s important for relationship building with families to conduct a home visit. This can change the dynamic between you and the family. During a home visit, you will be relating to the person on their home turf. You will likely come away with a much deeper understanding of where parents are coming from, and what services and supports will best fit their situation. The Family Achievement Coach should schedule the first home visit within two weeks of completing a family’s profile.

Confidentiality and Boundaries

Every home visit is important; you are always building relationships with the family. As you build trust and gain the family’s confidence they will often share information that they have not shared with others. Be clear about boundaries; let them know you cannot cover for abuse, illegal activity, or drug use. Let them know what information is confidential, what information is shared, and with whom.

Remember: the key to building relationships is learning to listen and showing concern and understanding for the family. Show empathy, avoid taking sides, or making promises. Also, remember you’re on the family’s “turf”; try to help them understand you are there to guide, teach, and support them as they attempt to make positive changes. Use encouragement. If a family is extremely reluctant or uncomfortable in sharing information, you may need to use two or three visits that are focused only on building rapport with the family. Try to see what is going on from the family’s perspective, not your own. Do not assume that reluctance is resistance. DO WHAT YOU SAY ARE GOING TO DO - DON’T REPLICATE THE SYSTEM.

Benefits of home visiting include:

- Natural setting and environment
- Decreases power differential
- Limits transportation and mobility issues for families
- Effective, evidence-based modality in practice and support
Preparing for a home visit:

- Review the family's profile and goals
- Check in on the family's progress toward completing the goal.
- Ensure that your computer is fully charged
- Reserve a hot spot for sufficient access to a WIFI connection.
- Call the family prior to heading out to their home to remind them of your visit.

Tips for visiting a home:

- Stand where you can be seen.
- State the purpose of your visit.
- Ask where the adult would like you to sit.
- Establish the focus of the visit.
- Listen to your intuition. If a situation doesn’t feel safe, leave.

During visits observe the following:

- Parent responses to basic needs of children: food, hygiene, etc.
- Supervision of children/safety issues
- Behavior of children/discipline methods used by parents
- Emotional responses of children and parents
- Problem solving skills of parents
- Parents’ ability to be nurturing
- Amount of attention focused on children
- Parents’ ability to listen and communicate with children
- Parents’ ability to praise children
- Parents’ response to suggestions you provide
- Parents’ knowledge and use of community resources
- Parenting style and/or interaction style with children
Next Steps

- Follow up by connecting the family with the right services and supports immediately.
- Seek support or guidance for any outstanding issues or concerns from your manager or Lead NAZ Family Achievement Coach.

Personal Safety

When entering a home, be ready for the unexpected. Know when to escalate situations to your manager.

When going on home visits, to avoid becoming a target for crime:

- Leave valuables in your car out of sight (e.g. laptop, iPad, purse, wallet).
- Keep your cell phone on and in your pocket.
- Pay attention to your environment.
- Use your instincts to determine if you are in danger.
- If you sense you are in serious danger, step back by the door and say you have to go to your car for your phone. You can drive away.

When to Escalate

If you experience inappropriate conduct from a family member you should:

- Tell the individual to stop immediately.
- Leave the home.
- Let your manager know immediately and document the experience.

Mandated reporting

If you believe you have cause to report concerns for a minor or vulnerable adult’s safety, contact your manager immediately and pass on the situation to them. Your manager will take over and make a report, if warranted. Some situations must be reported to authorities and others are a “teachable moment” for parents.
All NAZ staff are mandated reporters of child abuse or neglect. If staff observe abuse happening, a child reports abuse, or physical marks are observed on a child, there is a strong likelihood that the issue will need to be reported to Child Protection. Reporting needs to occur within 24 hours of report or observation. NAZ staff are expected to immediately inform their direct manager or other manager staff when this occurs. The manager will work with the Family Achievement Coach to determine if and what needs to be reported.

Always trust your instincts and go with your gut. If something doesn’t feel right, then report it to a manager (see NAZ Mandated Reporting Procedure).

**Cultural Responsiveness**

*Suhil and Ameena’s Story*

Suhil and Ameena are a traditional Muslim couple who immigrated from Somalia six years ago. NAZ is working to ensure they have a positive experience that is as seamless as possible. Suhil works with a male Family Achievement Coach, but Ameena can meet with a female Family Achievement Coach when she comes to the office. To overcome the language barrier, their 10-year-old son initially started to translate for them. Their Family Achievement Coach helped them to understand that this is not always in the best interest of the child because conversations can cover sensitive information. NAZ now has translators available as needs arise.

**The NAZ Approach to Cultural Responsiveness**

NAZ is committed to inclusive practice, and are aware that as our reach expands, so will the client demographic that we serve. No family will be turned away due to linguistic, cultural, social, or capacity differences. NAZ is also committed to hiring and retaining staff that reflect all of the cultures and languages of the families that we serve to the best of our ability.

NAZ staff represents a diverse cross section of the Northside and surrounding communities. The families we serve also represent various linguistic, cultural, and ethnic origins. Currently, more than 80% of NAZ staff members are people of color.

The NAZ families we serve are evolving continuously, and as we evolve, we anticipate additional cultural, linguistic and ethnic populations including Southeast Asian, Latino, and African. NAZ is committed to ensuring that partnerships with families include intentional interactions with culturally
infused principles. As our family demographic shifts, so will the staff at NAZ, to constantly work towards the staff demographic reflecting the family demographic.

As we move forward in our work, NAZ staff will be supported in their discovery and learning of working across differences, including gender, race, ethnicity, language, and orientation. Concepts of culturally infused practice will be included in staff trainings, individual supervisions, and throughout agency policies and practices.

NAZ staff are allies and partners in their work with families. Staff are expected to learn, reflect on and understand the patterns and effects of oppression and injustice as it relates to work with families, access to services, and the change process. Listening and observing are key to this process, as well as a deep comfort with uncertainty and unknowing. Operating as a respectful and “informed not-knower” is key in your work with families. Also, it is important that Family Achievement Coaches understand their lived experiences of potential oppression as well as understanding their own power and privilege in relationship to their families.

Being honest with yourself, the families you partner with, your peers and manager are crucial components to providing culturally responsive and thoughtful engagement practices. We will evolve and learn throughout our time at NAZ, with an expectation of transparency and self-awareness.

What is Culture?

Culture can be defined as a set of tools that produce ways of being, doing and making sense of the world. It is the expectation that all NAZ staff operate from a framework of culturally infused practice. That is, we expect all staff to acknowledge culture, race, gender, language and class as crucial factors in an individual’s life experience and identity. We acknowledge that culture is not defined strictly and that each individual within a culture experiences his or her own identity and connection to it differently and uniquely. We operate as informed not-knowers when faced with new experiences with families, acknowledge our limited perspective and experience, while also being mindful of our own judgments or reactions to the lives of those we encounter.

Cultural responsiveness is the ability to relate across age, race, sex, etc. While we can never completely understand another culture, we can listen to families and keep an open mind about our differences. Family Achievement Coaches are expected to use individual supervision to discuss cultural challenges.

It’s important to remain humble and have an attitude of service and partnership while working across cultures. You will be learning from the family as they learn from you.
Be patient and seek to understand before being understood.

Action
- Ask the family questions about their culture and let them know that you will work to understand where they are coming from as best you can, but that you’ll need their help along the way.
- Find cultural liaisons within the community to guide your work with families.
- Practice ally behaviors with your families, acknowledging both difference and similarities.
- Behave as an informed not-knower as you learn more about your families, their lives, identities, cultures, and ethnicity.
- Be comfortable with what you do not know, about yourself, your families, and the traditions, cultures, and groups with which they identify.
- Act as an informed not-knower, ask respectful questions, remain true to yourself, and be mindful of others’ lived experiences.
- Do not assume that an individual represents a specific group nor adheres to the practices of one particular group.

**Language barriers:** Children are not served by interpreting for the family, because sensitive issues can come up that the children should not be discussing. In this situation, it is best to bring in an interpreter from NAZ. NAZ will ensure that an interpreter is available for all families. Family Achievement Coaches are expected to identify this need and discuss it with their immediate manager.
Use of Self

You are a Family Achievement Coach because you:
- Have empathy, caring, compassion: “Emotional IQ”.
- Have the ability to draw from personal life experience to relate to families.
- Sympathize and empathize with families and their situations.
- Understand and are not judgmental.
- Understand the importance of education and its power in changing the life path of individuals.

You are Viewed by the People You Serve as Equals and Neighbors

- Represent yourself as a community member first.
- Take pride in your role as a Family Achievement Coach and the community you represent.
- Remember that North Mineapolis is not very big, and people are always looking to you for an example.
- It is important to believe in the NAZ mission.
- Understanding of the NAZ system and its partners.
- Be familiar with the stereotypes about North Minneapolis and don’t buy in to them.
- Project a positive attitude about the neighborhood and the changes NAZ is helping to foster within the community, while acknowledging the challenges faced by the community.
- It’s okay not to have all of the answers. Lean on and learn from your team.

Use of Self in the Coaching Process

Coaching begins with developing an awareness of your own self. It focuses on helping you to move from being unaware to being aware so that you can make informed, intentional, conscious Use-of-Self choices that may result in the achievement of your desired performance.

- Because of their life circumstances, many families do not recognize their own power. You are working to change this.
- Power is already inside of people, but they need to recognize it and use it to govern their own life.
- Family Achievement Coaches help families recognize their power to govern their lives and help them to see their own value.
Power Differential and Use of Self

Being a Family Achievement Coach creates a power differential and you need to recognize this and therefore must know how to “use self” in relationship with families. Your choice to share parts of yourself must be grounded in the desire to support the family, and not your own needs or emotions. This is a delicate and imperfect balance, one that requires consistent reflection and support from your manager and peers.

- Do not approach your work with an air of authority coming from your title as Family Achievement Coach.
- Be humble.
- Value identification/self awareness.
- Take charge of your own emotions.
- Identify and label them to be able to manage them.
- Know how to regulate emotions.
- Model the self-discovery that is taught in Family Academy.
- Balance transparency (so families can relate) with respect for boundaries (which families must control).
- Share your experiences to help families understand – be able to talk and relate.
- Be consistent and maintain boundaries - maintain integrity along with being professional.
- Put power back on them - “You can’t like them so much that you can’t do your job.”
- Ability to “be present” - i.e. Wisdom combined with cognitive and emotional = being present.
- Know your own strengths (and weaknesses) and how to tap into them.
Support the Family Achievement Coach

Family Achievement Coaches Need Support Too

Being a Family Achievement Coach is more than a job. It becomes part of who you are in this community. Therefore, plan to be:

- Flexible with your time when working with families just as you want them to be engaged with you.
- Respectful, non-judgmental, and persistent when meeting families wherever they are in the process. Each family will be different and at different stages during the development of the Family Achievement Coach-family relationship.
- Able to ask questions and discuss things at the right time.
- Aware of the difference between procrastination vs. barriers that may be hindering family from getting to the next step or level. If not procrastination, find out what the barriers are. Take baby steps if necessary to get to the desired outcome.
- Understanding that being a Family Achievement Coach and working at NAZ means that there are high expectations with high support.

Family Achievement Coaches spend a lot of time with families, and listen to the challenges of their lives, which could be frustrating enough to affect your personal life and work life. It is important to renew yourself by finding a balance between the two, to continue being a healthy and effective Family Achievement Coach.

Find things that will help you renew

- Eat lunch every day while at work.
- Get regular exercise.
- Ask for support from your manager. They can often inspire and uplift you.
- Stay connected to your own support structure of family and friends.
- Separate work and your home life as much as possible.
- Manage boundaries with families.
- Realize you can’t fix everybody’s problems overnight. Change often takes a long time to occur.
- Don’t take things personally.
- Tap into spiritual and religious connections.
- Practice de-escalation techniques so you are ready for difficult situations with families.
NAZ Engagement Guide, July 2016

Lean on and learn from your team

- Remember you don’t have to know everything and that you’re not a super hero. It’s okay to not know and to ask questions.
- Rely on your team of fellow Family Achievement Coaches and your managers.
- Recognize your own gifts and what you bring to the table as well as the gifts of others and how they can help you.
- The team “piggy-backs” off of each other and uses each other’s unique gifts to help out in difficult situations.
- Accept that conflicts will arise—but accepting it and being open to working together and being a part of the solution with conflicts will strengthen your approach and your team.

Don't come in feeling like you know everything or be frustrated that you don't know enough. Have confidence in yourself and believe in what you're doing.

Feel free to ask all the questions you want, feel free to let your manager know if you're tired, if you’re feeling stressed, or if it's something you feel you can't handle.

Shadow Other NAZ Family Achievement Coaches

- This helps you gain experience, comfort, and a sense of how to develop your own approach.
- You will begin to develop your own style that is comfortable for you.

If you have a hard time with a family pushing your personal boundaries, it may be necessary to work with your manager to have the family assigned to another Family Achievement Coach. This will help both you and the family be more successful. If you sense that you are becoming burned out, enlist the support of your manager. The most important step is recognizing things that trigger stress within your work. The more proactive you are in meeting your personal needs the better you will be at meeting the needs of families you partner with.
What can I expect from my NAZ Manager?

**Modeling**—Your manager should be able to demonstrate the skills and techniques you are learning as a Family Achievement Coach. A manager should display professional, quality interactions with others as you witness your manager engaging with families and other NAZ staff members.

**Coaching**—Your manager should communicate his or her expertise about the NAZ ecosystem and its partners, engagement, and strategies for evoking positive change. He or she teaches by way of discussion, team meetings, training, anecdotes, modeling, or one-on-one supervision.

**Guiding**—Your manager provides an example for how you interact with families, NAZ staff members and other community leaders. He or she is responsible helping to integrate you into co-located work sites and for team-building efforts that reinforce support and NAZ values.

**Advocating**—Your manager supports you to adequately meet the needs of the families that you work with. He or she is your partner—the person you can relay on to assist you in navigating systems and challenges. He or she works with the NAZ leadership to advocate for the resources you require to work effectively with families.

**Assessing**—Your manager will assess your work performance and support your professional growth by mirroring the Achievement Coach relationship with you. Your manager plays a role in assessment and monitoring to ensure that your interactions with families and scholars are high quality.