Introductory Packet

# *Parent and Home Involvement in Schools*

## (Revised 2015)

# Parent & Home Involvement in Schools

In general, research findings over the past 30 years have consistently shown home involvement in schooling has a positive impact on youngster's attitudes, aspirations, and achievement. The tasks ahead include expanding the focus beyond thinking only in terms of parents and expanding the range of ways in which schools connect with those in the home. In particular, more intensive efforts must focus on those in the home who have the greatest influence on a student's well being and with whom it has proven difficult to connect. New approaches must be developed and evaluated to clarify how best to involve such hard-to-reach individuals.

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# I. A Broad View of Involvement

## A. Home Involvement, Engagement, and Re-engagement in Schooling

From: *Transforming Student and Learning Supports: Developing a Unified, Comprehensive, and Equitable System* (Chapter 6) – http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/pdfdocs/book/book.pdf

> *Research findings accumulated over ... decades ... show that ... parental encouragement, activities, and interest at home and participation in schools and classrooms affect children's achievement, attitudes, and aspirations, even after student ability and family socioeconomic status are taken into account.*
>
> *Joyce Epstein*

> *The strongest predictors that a student is likely to drop out are family characteristics such as: socioeconomic status, family structure, family stress (e.g., death, divorce, family moves), and the mother's age. Students who come from low-income families, are the children of single, young, unemployed mothers, or who have experienced high degrees of family stress are more likely than other students to drop out of school. Of those characteristics, low socioeconomic status has been shown to bear the strongest relationship to students' tendency to drop out.*
>
> *National Education Association*

**R**esearch findings over the past 30 plus years consistently indicate the value of home support for schooling. Moreover, with respect to students who are not doing well at school, efforts to enhance home involvement are an basic element of the overall approach to addressing factors interfering with school learning and performance.

Despite the long-standing call by policy makers and researchers for schools to enhance parent involvement, the challenges in doing so have confounded many schools. Our analyses indicate that this will continue to be the case as long as the focus fails to account for the variety of individuals providing "parenting" and until "involvement" is designed as a mutually beneficial, equitable, and engaging process.

Instead of just focusing on *parent* involvement think about students being raised primarily by grandparents, aunts, older siblings, "nannies," and in foster homes. Primary child caretakers differ. That is why we stress the term *home* involvement.

Other home involvement complications stem from factors such as caretaker economic status, work schedules, immigrant status, ethnic and racial considerations, single parent families, number of youngsters in the home, homes where English is not spoken, extended families, military families, families where parents are in prison, foster homes, and homeless families and youngsters. In addition, some caretakers have disabilities, and some are dysfunctional.

Home situations also differ in caretaker attitudes about school. Such attitudes often reflect personal past experiences as well as current encounters and how well their youngsters are doing at school. (Remember, some have more than one youngster who is not doing well.) Involving reluctant primary caretakers is difficult and often handled at school as a low priority.

In general, as with students, parents and other caretakers vary in their personal motivation and ability to participate at school. And as with many students who are not doing well at school, (re)establishing productive *working* relationships with some caretakers involves addressing individual psychosocial and educational barriers and doing so in a personalized way.

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## Reflecting on Those Who Aren't Involved

We find that most efforts to involve parents are aimed at those who want and are able to show up at school. It's important to have activities for such parents. It's also important to remember that, at many schools, these parents represent a small percent of families.

*What about the rest?* Especially those whose children are doing poorly at school.

Ironically, endeavors to involve families whose youngsters are doing poorly often result in parents becoming less involved.  For example, a parent of such a youngster usually is called to school to explore the child's problems and often leaves with a sense of frustration, anger, and guilt. It is not surprising, then, that the parent subsequently avoids school contact as much as feasible.

A colleague describes the typical pattern of messages over time from the school to families of struggling students as follows:

> *Early messages:* We are concerned about ... [missing assignments, poor attendance, lack of academic progress, behavior problems] ...

> *Over the years the school's messages become more urgent:* Dear parents, we need a conference to talk about ... [behavior problems, academic problems, truancy]; please attend student study team meeting...

> *Finally, the school's messages become more formal:* This is to inform you ... [your child will be retained, your child will be suspended]; you must attend an attendance review board meeting ....

*Schools that really want to involve those at home minimize "finger wagging" and offer more than parent education* classes.

***We are reminded of the dictum that it can take as many as eight positive interactions to restore a relationship after a negative encounter.***

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The various complications that must be addressed in enhancing home involvement can be categorized as institutional, impersonal, and personal barriers (see Exhibit 1).

**Exhibit 1**

**General Types and Forms of Barriers to Home Involvement**

**Forms of Barriers**

|  |  | Negative Attitudes | Lack of Mechanisms/Skills | Practical Deterrents |
|---|---|---|---|---|
|  |  | <u>Examples</u> | <u>Examples</u> | <u>Examples</u> |
| **T y p e s** | Institutional | School administration is hostile toward increasing home involvement | Insufficient staff assigned to planning and implementing ways to enhance involvement; no more than a token effort to accommodate different languages | Low priority given to home involvement in allocating resources such as space, time, and money |
| **of** **B a r r i e r s** | Impersonal | Home involvement suffers from benign neglect | Rapid influx of immigrant families overwhelms school's ability to communicate and provide relevant home involvement activities | Schools lack resources; majority in home have problems related to work schedules, childcare, transportation |
|  | Personal | Specific teachers and parents feel home involvement is not worth the effort or feel threatened by such involvement | Specific teachers and parents lack relevant languages and interpersonal skills | Specific teachers and parents are too busy or lack resources |

Increasing attention has been given to reducing institutional and impersonal barriers. However, as with so many endeavors to address barriers to learning and teaching, home involvement policies and practice are not well-developed.

From the perspective of transforming student and learning supports, interventions to engage and re-engage those in the home who seem uninterested or resistant raise all the issues and problems associated with intervening with reluctant individuals in general. For such parents and other home caretakers, extraordinary outreach strategies and a full continuum of supports probably are required to enable effective home involvement in schooling. The current imperative in this arena is to

- broaden the focus beyond thinking only in terms of parents

- enhance the range of ways in which schools address factors that interfere with (re)engaging primary caretakers (with particular attention to outreaching to those who have a child who is not doing well and those who are reluctant to engage)

- transform current policy and practice to fully integrate home involvement and engagement into a unified, comprehensive, and equitable system for addressing barriers to learning and teaching.

Over the years, the agenda for home involvement in schooling has reflected multiple aims and contrasting but not necessarily mutually exclusive rationales. For example, parents may be viewed as consumers, citizens, or both. A t the root of the matter are debates about the role of schools as political and socialization agents, as a marketplace, and as a source of helping, especially for those with specific needs.

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## Underlying Rationales for Involving the Home

In general, underlying rationales shaping home involvement interventions can be contrasted as pursuing *political, socialization, economic,* and/or *helping agenda.* A *political* agenda focuses on the role the home plays in making decisions about schools and schooling and on the degree to which the agenda is personal and/or socially responsible. Examples of venues for political participation include advisory and shared governance committees, lobbying politicians, and supporting school bond measures.

A *socialization* agenda is seen in many of the messages sent home and in the widespread emphasis on school-based parent training. The intent is to influence parent-caretaker practices and attitudes in ways that facilitate what goes on at school.

An *economic* agenda is seen in views of the school as a marketplace choice and parents as consumers, in conflicts related to privatization of facets of public education, and in the ways the home is used as a supplementary resource to compensate for budget limitations.

A *helping* agenda is reflected in interventions designed to aid individuals in addressing barriers to learning and teaching. This can include facilitating family access to health and social services at the school and referral to community services.

From a special education perspective, Dunst and colleagues (1991) offer an example of conflicting agenda for home involvement. They differentiate family intervention policies and practices in terms of the degree to which they are (1) family-centered, (2) family-focused, (3) family-allied, or (4) professional-centered. Their view is that, in contrast to professional-centered approaches, a family-oriented agenda is much more committed to

- enhancing a sense of community (i.e., "promoting the coming together of people around shared values and common needs in ways that create mutually beneficial interdependencies")

- mobilizing resources and supports (i.e., "building support systems that enhance the flow of resources in ways that assist families with parenting responsibilities")

- sharing responsibility and collaboration (i.e., "sharing ideas and skills by parents and professionals in ways that build and strengthen collaborative arrangements")

- protecting family integrity (i.e., "respecting the family beliefs and values and protecting the family from intrusion upon its beliefs by outsiders")

- strengthening family functioning (i.e., "promoting the capabilities and competencies of families necessary to mobilize resources and perform parenting responsibilities in ways that have empowering consequences")

- ensuring proactive services (i.e., "adoption of consumer-driven human service-delivery models and practices that support and strengthen family functioning").

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**Early Frameworks**

As stressed, the prevailing focus has been on *parents* (usually mothers). Thus, early frameworks were built around connecting with parents. For example, many years ago Joyce Epstein (l988) described five types of parent-school involvements. As categorized by Epstein, the focus is on:

> (1) *basic obligations of parents to children and school* (e.g., providing food, clothing, shelter; assuring health and safety; providing child rearing and home training; providing school supplies and a place for doing school work; building positive home conditions for learning),

> (2) *basic obligations of school to children and family* (e.g., using a variety of communication methods to inform parents about school schedules, events, policies and about children's grades, test scores, daily performance; treating children justly and effectively -- including accounting for differences),

> (3) *parent involvement at school* (e.g., assisting teachers and students with lessons, class trips; assisting administrators, teachers, and staff in cafeteria, library, computer labs; assisting organized parent groups in fund-raising, community relations, political awareness, program development; attending student assemblies, sports events; attending workshops, discussion groups, training sessions),

> (4) *parent involvement in student learning at home* (e.g., contributing to development of child's social and personal skills, basic academic skills, and advanced skills by aiding with schoolwork, providing enrichment opportunities, and monitoring progress and problems),

> (5) *parent involvement in governance and advocacy* (e.g., participating in decision making groups; advocating for improved schooling).

Jackson and Cooper (l989) added a sixth and seventh category to Epstein's work. The sixth, *parent decision making*, stresses parents as consumers in the marketplace of available educational choices (e.g., making the best feasible arrangements to ensure their child's success). Their seventh category, *parent community networks,* covers involvements related to using "the unique culture of the local parent community to help all parties concerned." Included in this category are schools as places for parents to congregate and solve problems, activities that improve parents' skills, schooling that builds on parents' cultural traditions, and networking relevant to parents' agenda.

**Reframing Parent Involvement**

Building on the early work, as noted, we place greater emphasis on the full range of those influencing the student's life at home and on addressing barriers to engagement. In doing so, we present the agenda for involvement as a continuum of potential interventions that reflect the differences in primary caretakers needs and interests and the needs of the school (see Exhibit 2).

At one end of the continuum, the focus is on helping those in the home address their own basic needs so that they are able to meet basic obligations to their children. At the other end, the emphasis is on increasing home involvement in improving what goes on at schools and supporting public education. In between, there are interventions to enhance communication between school and home (especially with reference to matters related to the student), participation in making essential decisions about the student, support at home related to the student's *basic* learning and development, and involvement in solving problems and providing support at home and at school with respect to a student's *special* needs.
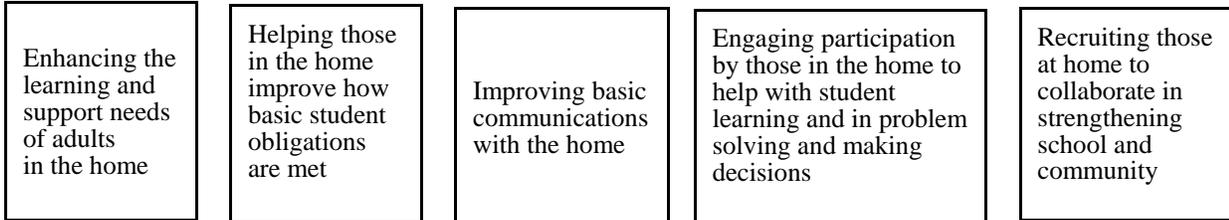
Here are some examples related to each of these agenda items:

(a) addressing the specific learning and support needs of adults in the home (e.g., support services to assist in addressing basic survival needs and obligations to the children; adult education classes to enhance literacy, job skills, English-as-a-second language, citizenship preparation; enrichment and recreational opportunities; mutual support groups)

(b) helping those in the home improve how basic student obligations are met (e.g., enhancing caretaker literacy skills; providing guidance related to parenting and how to help with schoolwork; teaching family members how to support and enrich student learning)

(c) improving forms of basic communication that promote the well-being of student, family, and school (e.g., facilitating home-school connections and sense of community through family networking and mutual support; facilitating child care and transportation to reduce barriers to coming to school; language translation; phone calls and/or e-mail from teacher and other staff with good news; frequent and balanced conferences – student-led when feasible; outreach to attract and facilitate participation of hard-to-reach families – including student dropouts)

(h) enhancing home support for student learning and development and for problem solving and decision making essential to a student's well-being (e.g., preparing and engaging families for participation in supporting growth and in planning and problem-solving)

(i) recruiting those at home to support, collaborate, and partner in strengthening school and community by meeting classroom, school, and community needs (e.g., volunteering to welcome and support new families; participating in school governance)

Whatever the agenda, all interventions must address differences in motivation and capability. In particular, outreach strategies must account for differences ranging from individuals who are motivationally ready and able to those whose attitudes and/or capabilities make them reluctant and even avoidant.

As with all student and learning supports, the work is strengthened when there is broad involvement of stakeholders in planning and being responsible for effective implementation. Garnering a wide range of stakeholder involvement provides a large pool from which to recruit resources for the work. In this respect, some schools establish a *parent or family center* to enhance the attractiveness of home involvement. In doing so, care must be taken to ensure no one group dominates use so that such venues remain inviting and open to all.

> *Reminder:* The other five arenas of the learning supports component overlap home involvement and engagement in a variety of ways. For example: Supports for transitions emphasizes providing welcoming and ongoing social supports for newcomer families. Student and family special assistance is concerned with addressing individual family factors that interfere with family involvement. Community engagement strategies include a focus on ways for the community to increasingly support students and their families.

### WHAT ARE PRIORITIES IN ENHANCING HOME INVOLVEMENT AND ENGAGEMENT?

Multi-year strategic development requires gap analyses and priority setting. This chapter along with the following self-study survey are intended as aids for this work. After conducting analyses, a workgroup can establish priorities for strengthening the most vital interventions and filling the most critical gaps. The first priorities are to enhance school improvement policy, planning, and action so that barriers to home involvement are reduced, and supports are enhanced in ways that increase involvement.

**Enhancing Policy, Planning, and Action to Minimize Barriers to Involvement**

Countering barriers to home involvement and engagement begins with ensuring a strong policy commitment to the work. Then, the focus turns to translating the policy into detailed strategic and action plans. This includes general and personalized staff development to ensure that all personnel (administrators, teachers, student and school support staff) understand the various barriers to home involvement and are well-prepared to assume their roles and responsibilities in addressing them. In personalizing staff development, special support is given to teachers who feel enhancing home involvement is too much of an added burden and those who feel threatened (e.g., because they think they can't make the necessary interpersonal connections due to racial, cultural, and/or language differences).

In general, the following are potential priorities in minimizing

- institutional barriers – modifying bureaucratic procedures to reduce negative and enhance positive home-school interactions; enhancing the attractiveness of involvement by opening schools for community use and offering a range of adult education and literacy opportunities on school sites

- impersonal barriers – countering practical problems related to work schedules, transportation, childcare and skill deficiencies related to cultural differences and levels of literacy; providing interactive communications and invitations; using social marketing to convey the mutual benefits of home involvement

- personal barriers – identifying and outreaching to specific school personnel or family members who may lack requisite motivation and skills or who find participation uncomfortable because it demands time and other resources or who have little interest or feel hostile about home involvement.

**Improving Supports in Ways that Increase Involvement**

Given the full continuum outlined in Exhibit 2, gap analyses usually identify priorities for ways to improve supports related to each need. Examples follow:

- To enhance the learning and support needs of adults in the home, schools have offered
  - >adult classes (e.g., focused on basic literacy and vocational skills, English as a Second Language, citizenship preparation)
  - >mutual support groups
  - >assistance in accessing outside help for personal needs

- To help those in the home improve how basic student obligations are met, schools have offered a range of education programs (e.g., focused on child-rearing/parenting, creating a supportive home environment for students, reducing factors that interfere with a student's school learning and performance, helping a student deal with challenges at home and school and in the neighborhood).

- In improving basic communications with the home, schools have included family members and foster care parents in designing and implementing the schools communication mechanisms (e.g., helping to improve front office interactions, newsletters, websites, email messages and other forms of messages to the home).

- To engage those in the home in participating in problem solving and making decisions essential to the student's well-being, schools have designed all interactions with those at home as natural opportunities for focusing on such matters.

- To recruit those at home to collaborate in strengthening school and community, schools have offered a variety of volunteer opportunities (see Exhibit 3).

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**Exhibit 3**
**Parent Participation at Pali High**

**PARENT VOLUNTEER PROGRAM** (http://www.palihigh.org/volunteeropps.aspx )

**Parent Outreach/Office Assistance**

Attendance Office, Health Office, Library,
College Center, Study Center,
School Tours, Tutoring,
Language Translation.
Test Prep SAT/ACT Boot Camps

**Fundraising**

Educational Foundation,
Booster Club -
Fall Phon-A-Thon, Holiday Boutique,
Casino Night, Silent Auction, Grant Writing,
Grant Writing (Community Based)

**Parent Organizations**

Booster Club, Education Foundation,
PTSA/PAC

**On Campus**

Fuerza Unida (Latino Student Union),
Village Nation (Black Student Union),
Music, Drama

**School Governance**

Board of Trustees Committees:
Communications, Educational Programs,
Finance & Budget, Operations & Facilities &
Technology, Policy, Strategic Planning (Academic,
Budget, Culture & Community, Facilities, Technology)

**Hospitality**

Baking/Cooking/Shopping, Graduation Reception,
Senior Activities (Picnic, Breakfast, Awards),
Student Events & Assemblies,
Teacher & Staff Lunch/Dinners

**Communication / Technology**

Website Maintenance/Design,
Email Communications: Writing or Editing
Social Media Networking/Tech Support

**Other Volunteer Opportunities**

Campus Beautification/Recycling/Gardening,
Health and Safety/Emergency Preparedness,
Field Trip Chaperone/Transportation, Athletic Events,
Educational Programs/Presentations

# A Few Comments About Enhancing
# Understanding of Engagement and Re-engagement

*A typical situation:* Someone at home is called to school because their youngster is misbehaving or is not learning well. The resulting encounter is unpleasant for family members and school staff. The dynamics certainly don't encourage positive engagement of the home with the school; more often than not they are a source of a growing disconnection.

Understanding the problem of increasing home involvement as that of *engaging* and, as necessary, *re-engaging* individuals helps rethink such encounters and makes engagement and re-engagement central in designing interventions to enhance home involvement.

Engagement reflects a person's motivation. Engagement has three facets: behavioral, emotional, and cognitive. From the perspective of intrinsic motivation theory and research, the emphasis in enhancing engagement is on (a) avoiding processes that mainly make people feel uncomfortable, controlled, and coerced and (b) moving away from practices that overrely on the use of reinforcers.

In general, research indicates that engagement is associated with positive outcomes and is higher when conditions are supportive, authentic, ensure opportunities for choice and provide sufficient structure. Conversely, disengagement is associated with threats to feelings of competence, self-determination, and/or relatedness to valued others. Maintaining engagement and re-engaging disconnected individuals requires minimizing conditions that negatively affect intrinsic motivation and maximizing conditions that have a positive motivational effect. Practices for preventing disengagement and strategies to re-engage families require minimizing conditions that negatively affect intrinsic motivation for connecting with the school and maximizing conditions that enhance such motivation.

Re-engaging those who have disconnected is a great challenge, especially when negative experiences in dealing with the school have resulted in a strong desire to avoid contact.

Reversing well-assimilated negative attitudes and behaviors is particularly difficult. As with disconnected students, personalized intervention strategies are required. Our work suggests outreaching to

A. *ask individuals to share their perceptions of the reasons for their disengagement* (This provides an invaluable basis for formulating a personalized plan to alter their negative perceptions and to prevent others from developing such perceptions.)

B. *reframe the reasons for and the processes related to home involvement to establish a good fit with the family's needs and interests* (The intent is to shift perceptions so that the process is viewed as supportive, not controlling, and the outcomes are perceived as personally valuable and obtainable.)

C. *renegotiate involvement* (The intent is to arrive at a mutual agreement with a delineated process for reevaluating and modifying the agreement as necessary.)

D. *reestablish and maintain an appropriate working relationship* (This requires the type of ongoing interactions that over a period of time enhance mutual understanding, provide mutual support, open-up communication, and engender mutual trust and respect.)

## CONCLUDING COMMENTS FOR CHAPTER 6

Difficulties in connecting homes and schools are inevitable because schools increasingly are coping with marketplace principles, as well as pursuing their responsibilities to the society for economic, social, and political goals and for stakeholder collective and individual benefits. The situation is further compicated because those at home have different needs and are both consumers and citizens. As such, they include supporters, helpers, combatants, and underminers.

Policy may call for and mandate "parent" involvement, but that has been no guarantee of effective practice. The lack of home involvement is especially acute in middle and secondary schools, schools serving low income homes, and for families who feel blamed when their child is not doing well at school.

Enhancing home involvement requires greater attention to the full range of caretakers and embedding this intervention arena into a unified and comprehensive system for addressing barriers to productive participation. Interventions include school-wide and classroom-based efforts designed to strengthen the home situation, enhance family problem solving capabilities, increase support for student development, learning, and well-being, and strengthen schools and the community. With all this in mind, transformation of student and learning supports stresses establishing authentic collaborations, countering inherent inequities in power and resources, and empowering homes and communities, especially in impoverished neighborhoods. Toward these ends, the next chapter outlines ways to outreach to and enhance connections with a wide range of community resources.

> *At this point, those already enmeshed in initiatives to make schools better are probably a bit overwhelmed. If so, skip ahead to Part III for clarification about how current resources can be reorganized and redeployed and collaborations with the community can help fill critical gaps.*

*Your mom said that she never saw this report I sent her about your work. What do you know about that?*

*Gee, I guess the dog has been eating more than my homework.*
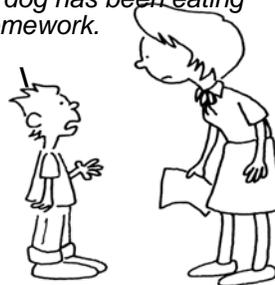
**For Free and Easily Accessed Online Resources Related to**
*Home Involvement and Engagement*

See our Center's Quick Find on
*Home Involvement in Schooling*
>http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/qf/homeinv_tt/homeinvolvfull.pdf

Also see related topics listed on the Quick Find menu
>http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/quicksearch.htm

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## I. A Broad View of Involvement

## B. Surveying What Your School Does
##    To Enhance Home Involvement

Home involvement is one of six major intervention arenas our Center categorizes as fundamental in developing a unified, comprehensive, and equitable system of learning supports. (All six arenas are essential for a school's component to address barriers to learning and teaching and re-engaging disconnected students and families.) Self-study surveys have been developed for all six arenas.

### About the Self-Study Process

This following type of self-study is best done by a workgroup. However, such a self-study is *NOT* about having another meeting, getting through a task, or an accountabilty measure! The process is about moving on to better outcomes for students.

A group of school staff (teachers, support staff, administrators) can use the items to discuss how the school currently addresses any or all of the learning supports arenas. Workgroup members initially might work separately in responding to survey items, but the real payoff comes from group discussions.

The items on a survey help clarify
  • what is currently being done and whether it is being done well and
  • what else is desired.
This provides a basis for discussing analyses and decision making.
The discussion and subsequent analyses also provide a form of quality review.

### About Analyzing Gaps; Reviewing Resources; Planning Action

Discussions using the self-study surveys usually involve some analyses. As you proceed, think about and discuss the following:

(1) Which learning supports address barriers that your district/school has identified as the most significant factors interfering with students learning and teachers teaching?

(2) Which of the significant factors are not being addressed at all or not well-enough? (These are critical gaps to fill.)

(3) Given that all the critical gaps probably can't be filled immediately, discuss priorities.

(4) Discuss whether any current activities are not effective and probably should be discontinued so that the resources can be redeployed to fill high priority gaps.

(5) Identify who in the community might be worth outreaching to with a view to establishing a collaboration to help fill high priority gaps.

(6) Are there other sources of funds available at this time to fill the gaps?

(7) Decide what steps to take in acting upon the analysis.

# *Home Involvement, Engagement, and Re-engagement in Schooling*

**T**his arena expands concern for parent involvement to encompass anyone in the home who is influencing the student's life. In some cases, grandparents, aunts, older siblings, "nannies," and foster homes have assumed parental and caretaking roles. Thus, schools and communities must go beyond focusing on parents in their efforts to enhance involvement and engagement of the most significant people in as student's home situation.

Included in this arena are school-wide and classroom-based efforts designed to

(a) address the specific learning and support needs of adults in the home (e.g., support services to assist in addressing basic survival needs and obligations to the children; adult education classes to enhance literacy, job skills, English-as-a-second language, citizenship preparation; enrichment and recreational opportunities; mutual support groups)

(b) help those in the home improve how basic student obligations are met (e.g., enhancing caretaker literacy skills; providing guidance related to parenting and how to help with schoolwork; teaching family members how to support and enrich student learning)

(c) improve forms of basic communication that promote the well-being of student, family, and school (e.g., facilitating home-school connections and sense of community through family networking and mutual support; facilitating child care and transportation to reduce barriers to coming to school; language translation; phone calls and/or e-mail from teacher and other staff with good news; frequent and balanced conferences – student-led when feasible; outreach to attract and facilitate participation of hard-to-reach families –  including student dropouts)

(d) enhancing home support for student learning and development and for problem solving and decision making essential to a student's well-being (e.g., preparing and engaging families for participation in supporting growth and planning and problem-solving)

(e) recruit those at home to support, collaborate, and partner in strengthening school and community by meeting classroom, school, and community needs (e.g., volunteering to welcome and support new families; participating in school governance)

The context for some of this activity may be a *parent or family center* if one has been established at the site. Outcomes include indices of caretakers' learning, student progress, and community enhancement specifically related to home involvement.

*Home Involvement ... in Schooling*

Use the following ratings in responding to items 1-5.
 DK = don't know; 1 = not yet; 2 = planned; 3 = just recently initiated; 4 = has been functional for a while; 5 = well institutionalized (well established with a commitment to maintenance


1. Is there a stated policy for enhancing Home Involvement
   and Engagement?                                           DK  1  2  3  4  5

2. Is there a designated leader or leaders for enhancing
   Home Involvement and Engagement?                          DK  1  2  3  4  5

3. Do personnel involved in enhancing Home Involvement
   and Engagement meet regularly as a workgroup to           DK  1  2  3  4  5
   evaluate current status and plan next steps?

4. Is there a written plan for capacity building related to
   enhancing Home Involvement and Engagement?                DK  1  2  3  4  5

5. Are there written descriptions available to give all
   stakeholders regarding current Home Involvement and       DK  1  2  3  4  5
   Engagement?
_____
Use the following ratings in responding to the next items.
         DK  = don't know
         1     = hardly ever effective
         2     = effective about 25 % of the time
         3     = effective about half the time
         4     = effective about 75% of the time
         5     = almost always effective

With respect to enhancing Home Involvement and
Engagement, how effective are each of the following:

         >current policy                                     DK  1  2  3  4  5

         >designated leadership                              DK  1  2  3  4  5

         >workgroup monitoring and planning of next steps    DK  1  2  3  4  5

         >capacity building efforts                          DK  1  2  3  4  5

*Home Involvement ... in Schooling (cont.)*

Indicate all items that apply.

| | Yes | Yes but more of this is needed | No | If no, is this something you want? |
|---|---|---|---|---|

**I. Addressing Family Basic Needs**

A. Which of the following are available to help those in the home meet basic survival needs?
  1. Is help provided for addressing special family needs for

| | Yes | Yes but more of this is needed | No | If no, is this something you want? |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| >food? | ___ | ___ | ___ | ___ |
| >clothing? | ___ | ___ | ___ | ___ |
| >shelter? | ___ | ___ | ___ | ___ |
| >health and safety? | ___ | ___ | ___ | ___ |
| >school supplies? | ___ | ___ | ___ | ___ |
| >other? (specify) _____ | ___ | ___ | ___ | ___ |
| 2. Are adults in the home offered assistance in accessing outside help for personal needs? | ___ | ___ | ___ | ___ |

B. Are there groups for

| | Yes | Yes but more of this is needed | No | If no, is this something you want? |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1. mutual support? | ___ | ___ | ___ | ___ |
| 2. discussion of relevant concerns and problems? | ___ | ___ | ___ | ___ |

C. Does the site offer adult classes focused on

| | Yes | Yes but more of this is needed | No | If no, is this something you want? |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1. English As a Second Language (ESL)? | ___ | ___ | ___ | ___ |
| 2. basic literacy skills? | ___ | ___ | ___ | ___ |
| 3. GED preparation? | ___ | ___ | ___ | ___ |
| 4. job preparation? | ___ | ___ | ___ | ___ |
| 5. citizenship preparation? | ___ | ___ | ___ | ___ |
| 6. other? (specify) _____ | ___ | ___ | ___ | ___ |

**II. Helping Families Address Obligations to the Student**

A. Are education opportunities offered to learn about

| | Yes | Yes but more of this is needed | No | If no, is this something you want? |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1. child-rearing/parenting? | ___ | ___ | ___ | ___ |
| 2. creating a supportive home environment for students? | ___ | ___ | ___ | ___ |
| 3 reducing factors that interfere with a student's school learning and performance? | ___ | ___ | ___ | ___ |
| B. Are guidelines provided for helping a student deal with homework? | ___ | ___ | ___ | ___ |
| C. Are adults in the home offered assistance in accessing help in addressing their child's needs? | ___ | ___ | ___ | ___ |
| D. Other? (specify) _____ | ___ | ___ | ___ | ___ |

**III. Improve Mechanisms for Communication and Connecting School & Home**

A. Are there periodic general announcements and meetings such as

| | Yes | Yes but more of this is needed | No | If no, is this something you want? |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1. advertising for incoming students? | ___ | ___ | ___ | ___ |
| 2. orientation for incoming students and families? | ___ | ___ | ___ | ___ |
| 3. bulletins/newsletters? | ___ | ___ | ___ | ___ |
| 4. website? | ___ | ___ | ___ | ___ |
| 5. back to school night/open house? | ___ | ___ | ___ | ___ |
| 6. parent-teacher conferences? | ___ | ___ | ___ | ___ |
| 7. other? (specify) _____ | ___ | ___ | ___ | ___ |

|  | Yes | Yes but more of this is needed | No | If no, is this something you want? |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **B. Is there a system to inform the home on a regular basis (e.g., regular letters, newsletters, email, computerized phone messages, website)** | | | | |
| 1. about general school matters? | ___ | ___ | ___ | ___ |
| 2. about opportunities for home involvement? | ___ | ___ | ___ | ___ |
| 3. other? (specify) _____ | ___ | ___ | ___ | ___ |
| **C. To enhance home involvement in the student's program and progress, are interactive communications used, such as** | | | | |
| 1. sending notes home regularly? | ___ | ___ | ___ | ___ |
| 2. a computerized phone line? | ___ | ___ | ___ | ___ |
| 3. email? | ___ | ___ | ___ | ___ |
| 4. frequent balanced in-person conferences with the family? | ___ | ___ | ___ | ___ |
| 5. student-led conferences? | ___ | ___ | ___ | ___ |
| 6. messages with good news about the student | ___ | ___ | ___ | ___ |
| 7. other? (specify) _____ | ___ | ___ | ___ | ___ |
| **D. Which of the following are used to enhance the home-school connection and sense of community?** | | | | |
| 1. Does the school offer orientations & open houses? | ___ | ___ | ___ | ___ |
| 2. Does the school have special receptions for new families? | ___ | ___ | ___ | ___ |
| 3. Does the school regularly showcase students to the community through | | | | |
| >student performances? | ___ | ___ | ___ | ___ |
| >award ceremonies? | ___ | ___ | ___ | ___ |
| >other? (specify) _____ | ___ | ___ | ___ | ___ |
| 4. Does the school offer the community | | | | |
| >cultural and sports events? | ___ | ___ | ___ | ___ |
| >topical workshops and discussion groups? | ___ | ___ | ___ | ___ |
| >health fairs? | ___ | ___ | ___ | ___ |
| >family preservation fairs? | ___ | ___ | ___ | ___ |
| >work fairs? | ___ | ___ | ___ | ___ |
| >newsletters? | ___ | ___ | ___ | ___ |
| >community bulletin boards? | ___ | ___ | ___ | ___ |
| >community festivals and celebrations? | ___ | ___ | ___ | ___ |
| >other? (specify) _____ | ___ | ___ | ___ | ___ |
| 5. Does the school facilitate family networking and mutual support? | ___ | ___ | ___ | ___ |
| 6. How does the school address barriers to participation? | | | | |
| >facilitate child care? | ___ | ___ | ___ | ___ |
| >facilitate transportation? | ___ | ___ | ___ | ___ |
| >provide language translations? | ___ | ___ | ___ | ___ |
| 7. Is there outreach to hard to involve families? | | | | |
| >making home visits? | ___ | ___ | ___ | ___ |
| >offering support networks? | ___ | ___ | ___ | ___ |
| >focusing on student dropouts? | ___ | ___ | ___ | ___ |
| >other? (specify) _____ | ___ | ___ | ___ | ___ |
| 8. Other? (specify) _____ | ___ | ___ | ___ | ___ |

| | Yes | Yes but more of this is needed | No | If no, is this something you want? |
|---|---|---|---|---|

**IVa. Enhancing Home Support for Student Learning and Development**

A. Are families instructed on how to provide opportunities for students to apply what they are learning? ___ ___ ___ ___

B. Are families instructed on how to use enrichment opportunities to enhance youngsters' social and personal and academic skills and higher order functioning? ___ ___ ___ ___

C. Are there family field trips? ___ ___ ___ ___

D. Are families provided space and facilitation for meeting together as a community of learners? ___ ___ ___ ___

E. Are family literacy programs available? ___ ___ ___ ___

F. Are family homework programs offered? ___ ___ ___ ___

G. Other? (specify) _____ ___ ___ ___ ___

**IVb. Involving Homes in Making Decisions Essential to the Student?**

A. Families are invited to participate through personal
  1. letters ___ ___ ___ ___
  2. phone calls ___ ___ ___ ___
  3. email ___ ___ ___ ___
  4. other (specify) _____ ___ ___ ___ ___

B. Families are informed about schooling choices through
  1. letters ___ ___ ___ ___
  2. phone calls ___ ___ ___ ___
  3. email ___ ___ ___ ___
  4. conferences ___ ___ ___ ___
  5. other (specify) _____ ___ ___ ___ ___

C. Families are taught skills to participate effectively in decision making. ___ ___ ___ ___

D. Does the school hold frequent in-person conferences with the family and student focused on problem-solving and decision making? ___ ___ ___ ___

E. With respect to mobilizing problem solving at home related to student needs
  1. Is instruction provided to enhance family problem solving skills(including increased awareness of resources for assistance)? ___ ___ ___ ___
  2. Is good problem solving modeled at conferences with the family? ___ ___ ___ ___

F. Other (specify) _____ ___ ___ ___ ___

### V. Recruiting Families to Collaborate in Strengthening School and Community

| | Yes | Yes but more of this is needed | No | If no, is this something you want? |
|---|---|---|---|---|

For which of the following are those in the home recruited and trained to help meet school/community needs?

1. Improving schooling for students by assisting

| | Yes | Yes but more of this is needed | No | If no, is this something you want? |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| >administrators? | —— | —— | —— | —— |
| >teachers? | —— | —— | —— | —— |
| >other staff? | —— | —— | —— | —— |
| >others in the community? | —— | —— | —— | —— |
| >with lessons or tutoring? | —— | —— | —— | —— |
| >on class trips? | —— | —— | —— | —— |
| >in the cafeteria? | —— | —— | —— | —— |
| >in the library? | —— | —— | —— | —— |
| >in computer labs? | —— | —— | —— | —— |
| >with homework helplines? | —— | —— | —— | —— |
| >the front office to welcome visitors and new enrollees and their families? | —— | —— | —— | —— |
| >with phoning/emails home regarding absences? | —— | —— | —— | —— |
| >outreach to the home? | —— | —— | —— | —— |
| >other? (specify) _____ | —— | —— | —— | —— |

2. Improving school operations by assisting with

| | Yes | Yes but more of this is needed | No | If no, is this something you want? |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| >school and community up-keep and beautification | —— | —— | —— | —— |
| >improving school-community relations | —— | —— | —— | —— |
| >fund raising | —— | —— | —— | —— |
| >PTA | —— | —— | —— | —— |
| >enhancing public support by increasing political awareness about the contributions and needs of the school | —— | —— | —— | —— |
| >school governance | —— | —— | —— | —— |
| >advocacy for school needs | —— | —— | —— | —— |
| >advisory councils | —— | —— | —— | —— |
| >program planning | —— | —— | —— | —— |
| >other? (specify) _____ | —— | —— | —— | —— |
| 3. Establishing home-community networks to benefit the community | —— | —— | —— | —— |
| 4. Other? (specify) _____ | —— | —— | —— | —— |

### VI. Capacity Building to Enhance Home Involvement

| | Yes | Yes but more of this is needed | No | If no, is this something you want? |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| A. Are resources budgeted to enhance to enhance home involvement and engagement in schools? | —— | —— | —— | —— |
| B. Are steps taken to enhance broad stakeholder involvement in home involvement and engagement? | —— | —— | —— | —— |

C. Is there ongoing personnel preparation related to home involvement and engagement for

| | Yes | Yes but more of this is needed | No | If no, is this something you want? |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1. teachers? | —— | —— | —— | —— |
| 2. student and learning supports staff? | —— | —— | —— | —— |
| 3. administrators? | —— | —— | —— | —— |
| 4. office staff? | —— | —— | —— | —— |
| 5. other (specify) _____ | —— | —— | —— | —— |

*Home Involvement ... in Schooling (cont.)*

| | **Yes** | **Yes but more of this is needed** | **No** | **If no, is this something you want?** |
|---|---|---|---|---|

D. Which of the following topics are covered in educating staff and other key stakeholders?

| | Yes | Yes but more of this is needed | No | If no, is this something you want? |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1. enhancing home involvement and engagement? | ___ | ___ | ___ | ___ |
| 2. overcoming barriers to home involvement (including re-engagement of disconnected families)? | ___ | ___ | ___ | ___ |
| 5. facilitating family participation in meetings to problem-solve and make decisions about the student? | ___ | ___ | ___ | ___ |
| 4. developing group-led mutual support groups? | ___ | ___ | ___ | ___ |
| 5. developing families as a community of learners? | ___ | ___ | ___ | ___ |
| 6. designing an inclusionary "Parent Center"? | ___ | ___ | ___ | ___ |
| 7. adopting curriculum for parent education? | ___ | ___ | ___ | ___ |
| 8. teaching parents to mentor & lead at the school? | ___ | ___ | ___ | ___ |
| 9. Other? (specify) _____ | ___ | ___ | ___ | ___ |

Indicate below other things you want the school to do in enhancing home involvement and engagement.

Indicate below other ways the school enhances home involvement and engagement.

Note: Other matters relevant to *Home Involvement, Engagement, and Re-engagement* are included in the other self-study surveys.

# I. A Broad View of Involvement

## C. The Impact of Family Involvement on the Education of Children

Here is the abstract from a report entitled: "The Impact of Family Involvement on the Education of Children Ages 3 to 8" by Van Voorhis, Maier, Epstein, & Lloyd that focuses on Literacy and Math Achievement Outcomes and Social-Emotional Skills.

http://www.mdrc.org/publication/impact-family-involvement-education-children-ages-3-8

This report summarizes research conducted primarily over the past 10 years on how families' involvement in children's learning and development through activities at home and at school affects the literacy, mathematics, and social-emotional skills of children ages 3 to 8. A total of 95 studies of family involvement are reviewed. These include both descriptive, nonintervention studies of the actions families take at home and at school and intervention studies of practices that guide families to conduct activities that strengthen young children's literacy and math learning. The family involvement research studies are divided into four categories:

- Learning activities at home, including those that parents engage in to promote their child's literacy and/or math skills outside school
- Family involvement at school, including the actions and interactions that families have while in the school building
- School outreach to engage families, including the strategies that schools and teachers use to engage families and make them feel welcome
- Supportive parenting activities, including the nature and quality of the parent-child relationship and home environment, rule-setting, and caring behaviors

Key Findings

- Family involvement is important for young children's literacy and math skills. The majority of studies, including some randomized control trials (RCTs), demonstrate this positive link. A few studies show positive relations with social-emotional skills. The weakest association was between family involvement at school and children's outcomes.
- Parents from diverse backgrounds, when given direction, can become more engaged with their children. And when parents are more engaged, children tend to do better.
- This review also provides recommendations for additional lines of inquiry and implications to guide next steps in both research and practice. While there is still more to learn about how to connect with and support caretakers' efforts to promote children's learning, what we already know from extant research can help guide this process.

More children attend preschool and all-day kindergarten than ever before, and educators are being urged by federal, state, and local institutions to use research-based or evidence-based approaches to improve their work with families and families' involvement with their children and the school. This review strengthens the belief that interventions to boost family involvement may be a critical piece when trying to support children's early learning.

# I. A Broad View of Involvement
## *D. Intervening to Enhance Home Involvement in Schooling*

As Davies has stressed, the "questions and conflict about parent and community relationships to schools began in this country when schools began".

Some families are quite receptive to efforts to involve them in schools and schooling. The focus of the following discussion is not on this relatively small group. Our Center's interest is in populations where systematic outreach and ongoing encouragement are essential to establishing and maintaining involvement. Efforts to involve such populations raise all the issues and problems associated with intervening with reluctant individuals.

Moreover, any given teacher or parent may feel it is too much of an added burden to meet to discuss student problems. Others may feel threatened because they think they can't make the necessary interpersonal connections due to racial, cultural, and/or language differences. Still others do not perceive available activities as worth their time and effort.

Impersonal barriers to home and staff participation are commonplace and rather obvious. For example, there can be practical problems related to work schedules, transportation, and childcare. There can also be skill deficiencies related to cultural differences and levels of literacy. There may be lack of interest due to insufficient information about the importance of home involvement.

Overcoming barriers, of course, is a primary intervention concern. And, when there are inadequate finances to underwrite ways to overcome barriers, finding the resources becomes the first barrier that must be overcome.

### Whose Interests Are to Be Served?  Agendas for Involving the Home

As already discussed, understanding types of and barriers to involvement provides a foundation for planning and implementing ways to enhance that involvement. Another essential perspective comes from awareness of contrasting and often conflicting intervention agendas.

Different rationales underlie interventions for involving the home. Most reflect society's agendas, and these often come into conflict with agendas aimed at helping those with special needs. At the root of the matter are age old social and political concerns related to inevitable conflicts between individual and societal interests.

All intentional interventions are rationally based. That is, underlying such activity there is a rationale whether or not it is explicitly stated. A rationale consists of views derived from philosophical, theoretical, empirical, and legal sources. Or, stated more boldly, underlying rationales consist of biases that guide and shape intervention aims and practices. Because of potential conflicts of interest, it is essential that the biases incorporated into an intervention rationale be clearly articulated and debated.

The problem of conflicting interests is reflected in the extensive concern raised about society's ability to exercise control through agendas for psychological and educational interventions.... At one extreme, it is argued that there are times when society must put its needs ahead of individual citizens' rights by pursuing policies and practices for maintaining itself. This is seen, for example, whenever parents are compelled by school personnel to talk about facets of their family life or to participate in some aspect of their child's schooling. At the other extreme, it is argued that society should never jeopardize individuals' rights (e.g., invade privacy, use coercive procedures). For many persons, however, neither extreme is acceptable, especially given how they define what is in the best interests of individuals in the society.

Without agreeing or disagreeing with either extreme, the importance of the debate can be appreciated. Specifically, it serves to heighten awareness about three basic problems; (a) No society is devoid of coercion in dealing with its members (e.g., no right or liberty is absolute), and coercion

is especially likely when interventions are justified as serving a minor's best interests; (b) interventions are used to serve the vested interests of subgroups in a society at the expense of other subgroups (e.g., to place extra burdens on minorities, the poor, women, and legal minors and to deprive them of freedoms and rights); and (c) informed consent and due process of law are key to protecting individuals when there are conflicting interests (e.g., about whom or what should be blamed for a problem and be expected to carry the brunt of corrective measures). Awareness of these problems is essential to protect individuals and subgroups from abuse by those with power to exercise direct or indirect control over them.

Given the preceding context, different intentions underlying intervention for home involvement in schools and schooling are worth highlighting. Four broad agendas are contrasted here, namely, socialization, economic, political, and helping agendas.

A socialization agenda is seen in messages sent home and in school-based parent training. These are meant to influence parent- caretaker attitudes toward schooling and to socialize parenting practices in ways designed specifically to facilitate schooling. An economic agenda is intended to aid schooling by involving the home as a supplementary resource to compensate for budget limitations. A political agenda focuses on the role the home plays in making decisions about schools and schooling. A helping agenda establishes programs to aid individuals in pursuing their own needs. Clearly, these four agendas are not mutually exclusive, as will be evident in the following brief discussion of each.

## Socialization Agenda

Schools are societal institutions with prime responsibilities for socializing the young, ensuring the society's economic survival through provision of an adequately equipped work force, and preserving the political system. In pursuing society's interest in socializing children, schools try to socialize parents, for instance, by influencing parent attitudes and parenting practices. This is seen in the widespread pressure exerted on parents to meet "basic obligations" and in the emphasis on parent "training."

Often, a school's agenda to socialize parents is quite compatible with the interests of parents and their children. For instance, schools and those at home want to minimize childrens' antisocial behavior and equip them with skills for the future. However, there are times when the school's socialization agenda comes into conflict with the home's agenda with respect to meeting other basic obligations and needs, such as the obligation to avoid causing or exacerbating a problem.

Here's a not uncommon situation of conflict between school and home agenda that underscores the complexity of this concern:

Jose's family had come to the United States 4 years ago. His father worked as a gardener; his mother worked in the garment district. Neither parent was fluent in English; mother less so than father.

Jose's parents were called to school because of his misbehavior in the classroom. The teacher (who did not speak Spanish) informed them that she was having to use a range of behavioral management strategies to control Jose. However, for the strategies to really work, she said it also was important for the parents to use the some procedures at home. To learn these "parenting skills," the parents both were to attend one of the 6-week evening workshops the school was starting. They were assured that the workshop was free, was available in English or Spanish, and that there would be childcare at the school if they needed it.

After meeting with the teacher, Jose's father, who had reluctantly come to the conference, told his wife she should attend the workshop-but he would not. She understood that he saw it as her role-not his-but she was frightened; they fought about it. They had been fighting about a lot of things recently. In the end, she went, but her resentment toward her husband grew with every evening she had to attend the training sessions.

Over the next few months, the mother attempted to apply what she was told to do at the workshop. She withheld privileges and confined Jose to periods of time-out whenever he

didn't toe the line. At the some time, she felt his conduct at home had not been and was not currently that bad-it was just the same spirited behavior his older brothers had shown at his age. Moreover, she knew he was upset by the increasingly frequent arguments she and her husband were having. She would have liked some help to know what to do about his and her own distress, but she didn't know how to get such help.

Instead of improving the situation, the control strategies seemed to make Jos6 more upset; he acted out more frequently and with escalating force. Soon, his mother found he would not listen to her and would run off when she tried to do what she had been told to do. She complained to her husband. He said it was her fault for pampering Jose. His solution was to beat the youngster.

To make matters worse, the teacher called to say she now felt that Jos6 should be taken to the doctor to determine whether he was hyperactive and in need of medication. This was too much for Jose's mother. She did not take him to the doctor, and she no longer responded to most calls and letters from the school.

Jose continued to be a problem at school and then at home, and his mother did not know what to do about it or who to turn to for help. When asked, Jose's teacher describes the parents as "hard to reach."

The above situation raises many issues. for example, involvement of the home in cases such as Jose's usually is justified by the school as "in the best interests of the student and the others in the class." However, clearly there are different ways to understand the causes of and appropriate responses to Jose's misbehavior. By way of contrast, another analysis might suggest that the problem lies in ill-conceived instructional practices and, therefore, might prescribe changing instruction rather than strategies focused on the misbehavior per se. Even given an evident need for home involvement, the way the mother was directed to deal with her son raises concerns about whether the processes were coercive. Questions also arise about social class and race. For example, if the family had come from a middle or higher income background, would the same procedures have been used in discussing the problem, exploring alternative ways to solve it, and involving the mother in parent training? In addition, there is concern that overemphasis in parent workshops on strategies for controlling children's behavior leads participants such as Jose's mother to pursue prac- tices that often do not address children's needs and may seriously exacerbate problems.

## Economic Agenda

Home involvement is a recognized way of supplementing school resources. The home may be asked to contribute money, labor, knowledge, skills, or talent. Controversy arises about this agenda due to concerns regarding fairness, as well as in connection with professional guild complaints and public funding considerations. For example, inequities among schools may be exacerbated because some schools can draw on the assets of higher income homes. Unions representing teachers and their assistants point to excessive use of parent and other volunteers as a factor affecting job availability and wage negotiations. And, increasing reliance on ad hoc sources of public support is seen as potentially counterproductive to mobilizing citizens and policy makers to provide an appropriate base of funding for public education.

## Political Agenda

Another reason for involving parents is related to the politics of school decision making. This agenda is seen in the trend toward parents assuming some form of policy-making "partnership" with the school, such as joining advisory and decision-making councils. In some cases, the intent apparently is to move parents into an equal partnership with school decision makers; in other instances, the aim appears to be one of giving the illusion that parents have a say or even demonstrating that parents are uninterested or unable to make sound policy.

The case of the Head Start program illustrates politics and policy related to home involvement. As Valentine and Stark  indicated, parent involvement policy in Head Start developed around three notions: parent education, parent participation, and parent control. "These three constructs signify

different dimensions of social change: individual change and institutional, or 'systems/ change". Initially, the goal was to use parent involvement to produce institutional change through either parent participation or parent control. Over time, this goal was displaced by individual change: national Head Start policy guidelines [in combination with local and federal initiatives to contain militancy] helped redirect parent involvement away from political organization toward a 'safe' combination of participatory decision-making and parent education".

## Helping Agenda

Prevailing agendas for involving the home emphasize meeting societal and school needs. It is not surprising, therefore, that little attention has been paid to schools helping parents and caretakers meet their own needs. Schools do offer some activities, such as parent support groups and classes to teach parents English as a second language, that may help parents and contribute to their well-being (e.g., by improving parenting or literacy skills). However, the rationale for expending resources on these activities usually is that they enhance parents' ability to play a greater role in improving schooling.

It seems reasonable to suggest that another reason for involving parents is to support their efforts to improve the quality of their lives. Included here is the notion of the school providing a social setting for parents and, in the process, fostering a psychological sense of community.. This involves creation of a setting where parents, school staff, and students want to and are able to interact with each other in mutually beneficial ways that lead to a special feeling of connection. It also encompasses finding ways to account for and celebrate cultural and individual diversity in the school community.

To these ends, ways must be found to minimize transactions that make parents feel incompetent, blamed, or coerced. Concomitantly, procedures and settings must be designed to foster informal encounters, provide information and learning opportunities, enable social interactions, facilitate access to sources of social support (including linkage to local social services), encourage participation in decision making, and so forth.

Examples abound. Parents might be encouraged to drop in, be volunteers, participate in publishing a community newsletter, organize social events such as breakfasts and potluck *dinners for* families of students and staff, plan and attend learning workshops, meet with the teacher to learn more about their child's curriculum and interests, help initiate parent support and mutual aid groups and other social networks, share their heritage and interests, check out books and attend story hours at the school's library, and go on field trips.

It should be reemphasized that the primary intent is to improve the quality of life for the participants-with any impact an schooling seen as a secondary gain. At the same time, moves toward fostering such a climate seem consistent with the effective school literature's focus on the importance of a school's climate, ethos, or culture.

Approaching the topic from a special education orientation, Dunst and colleagues provided a good example of the concern about differing agendas in involving the home. In categorizing family-oriented *intervention policies* and practices, they contrasted those that are family-centered versus those that are not. For instance, they categorized the characteristics of family oriented interventions in terms of six general emphases. Specifically, characteristics are differentiated with respect to a focus on (a) enhancing a sense of community, that is, "promoting the coming together of people around shared values and common needs in ways that create mutually beneficial interdependencies"; (b) mobilizing resources and supports, that is, "building support systems that enhance the flow of resources in ways that assist families with parenting responsibilities"; (c) sharing responsibility and collaboration, that is, "sharing ideas and skills by parents and professionals in ways that build and strengthen collaborative arrangements"; (d) protecting family integrity, that is, "respecting the family beliefs and values and protecting the family from intrusion upon its beliefs by outsiders"; (e) strengthening family functioning, that is, "promoting the capabilities and competencies of families necessary to mobilize resources and perform parenting

responsibilities in ways that have empowering consequences"; and (f) using proactive human service practices, that is, "adoption of consumer-driven human service-delivery models and practices that support and strengthen family functioning." Based on a review of the ideas underlying existing programs, they suggested interventions can be differentiated into four general categories: family centered, family focused, family allied, and professional centered.

Given that interventions to enhance home involvement are a growth industry, the underlying rationales for such involvement warrant articulation and debate. It is hoped that the preceding discussion illustrates the need for extensive exploration of social and political ramifications and clarification of policy and intervention implications.

## Conclusion

Schools determined to enhance home involvement must be clear as to their intent and the types of involvement they want to foster. Although the tasks remain constant, the breadth of intervention focus can vary over three sequential phases: (a) broadband contact s-focused on those who are receptive; (b) personalized contacts-added for those who need a little inducement; and (c) intensive special contacts-added for those who are extremely unreceptive. Then, they must establish and maintain mechanisms to carry out intervention phases and tasks in a sequential mariner. And, besides being involved in different types of home involvement, participants differ in the frequency, level, quality, and impact of their involvement.

Intervening to enhance home involvement in schools and schooling is as complex as any other psychological and educational intervention. Clearly, such activity requires considerable time, space, materials, and competence, and these ingredients are purchased with financial resources. Basic staffing must be underwritten. Additional staff may be needed; at the very least, teachers, specialists, and administrators need "released" time. Efforts to accommodate parent schedules by offering workshops and parent-teacher conferences in the evening and during weekends are likely to produce staff demands for compensatory time off or overtime pay. Furthermore, if such interventions are to be planned, implemented, and evaluated effectively, those given the responsibility will require instruction, consultation, and supervision.

The success of programs to enhance home involvement in schools and schooling is, first and foremost in the hands of policymakers. If increased home involvement in schools is to be more than another desired but unachieved aim of educational reformers, policymakers must understand the nature and scope of what is involved. A comprehensive intervention perspective makes it evident that although money alone cannot solve the problem, money is a necessary prerequisite. It is patently unfair to hold school personnel accountable for yet another major reform if they are not given the support necessary for accomplishing it. In an era when new sources of funding are unlikely, it is clear that such programs must be assigned a high priority and funds must be reallocated in keeping with the level of priority. To do less is to guarantee the status quo.

## I. A Broad View of Involvement

## E. Family-School Partnerships

**R**ecent years have seen an escalating expansion in school-family-community linkages. Initiatives are sprouting in a rather dramatic and ad hoc manner. These efforts could improve schools, strengthen neighborhoods, and lead to a marked reduction in young people's problems. Or, such "partnerships" and "collaborations" can end up being another reform effort that promised a lot, did little good, and even did some harm.

Our Center has discussed this topic extensively and prepared guides. For example, see

>"Home Involvement, Engagement, and Re-engagement in Schooling" – Chapter 6 in *Transforming Student and Learning Supports: Developing a Unified, Comprehensive, and Equitable System* – http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/pdfdocs/book/book.pdf

>*School-Community Partnerships: A Guide* – http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/pdfdocs/guides/schoolcomm.pdf

>*Fostering School, Family, and Community Involvement.* A Guidebook in the series, Safe and Secure: Guides to Creating Safer Schools http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/publications/44 guide 7 fostering school family and community involvement.pdf

Also see the Center Quick Find on *Parent/Home Involvement, Engagement, and Re-engagement in Schooling* – http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/qf/homework.htm

Related to all this, on the following pages, see the framework circulated by the U.S. Department of Education.

# The Dual Capacity-Building Framework for Family–School Partnerships

## The following section provides a brief explanation of the Dual Capacity-Building Framework and its components.

The Dual Capacity-Building Framework (See Figure 2 on page 8) was formulated using the research on effective family engagement and home–school partnership strategies and practices, adult learning and motivation, and leadership development. The Dual Capacity-Building Framework components include:

1.  a description of the capacity challenges that must be addressed to support the cultivation of effective home–school partnerships;

2.  an articulation of the conditions integral to the success of family–school partnership initiatives and interventions;

3.  an identification of the desired intermediate capacity goals that should be the focus of family engagement policies and programs at the federal, state, and local level; and

4.  a description of the capacity-building outcomes for school and program staff as well as for families.

After outlining these four components, we present three case studies that illustrate and further develop the Framework. The case studies feature a school, a district, and a county whose efforts to develop capacity around effective family–school partnerships embody the Dual Capacity-Building Framework.

### The Challenge

Many states, districts, and schools struggle with how to cultivate and sustain positive relationships with families. A monitoring report issued in 2008 by the U.S. Department of Education's Office of Elementary and Secondary Education found that family engagement was the weakest area of compliance by states.[12] According to the 2012 "MetLife Survey of the American Teacher," both teachers and principals across the country consistently identify family engagement to be one of the most challenging aspects of their work.[13] A common refrain from educators is that they have a strong desire to work with families from diverse backgrounds and cultures and to develop stronger home-school partnerships of shared responsibility for children's outcomes, but they do not know how to accomplish this. Families, in turn, can face many personal, cultural, and structural barriers to engaging in productive partnerships with teachers. They may not have access to the social and cultural capital needed to navigate the complexities of the U.S. educational system,[14] or they may have had negative experiences with schools in the past, leading to distrust or to feeling unwelcomed.[15] The limited capacity of the various stakeholders to partner with each other and to share the responsibility for improving student achievement and school performance is a major factor in the relatively poor execution of family engagement initiatives and programs over the years.[16]

Contributing to this problem is the lack of sustained, accessible, and effective opportunities to build capacity among local education agency (LEA) staff and families. If effective cradle-to-career educational partnerships between home and school are to be implemented and sustained with fidelity, engagement

## Figure 2: The Dual Capacity-Building Framework for Family–School Partnerships

**THE CHALLENGE**

Lack of opportunities for **School/Program Staff** to build the capacity for partnerships

**Ineffective Family–School Partnerships**

Lack of opportunities for **Families** to build the capacity for partnerships

**OPPORTUNITY CONDITIONS**

Process Conditions
- Linked to learning
- Relational
- Development vs. service orientation
- Collaborative
- Interactive

Organizational Conditions
- Systemic: across the organization
- Integrated: embedded in all programs
- Sustained: with resources and infrastructure

**POLICY AND PROGRAM GOALS**

To build and enhance the capacity of staff/families in the "4 C" areas:
- **Capabilities** (skills and knowledge)
- **Connections** (networks)
- **Cognition** (beliefs, values)
- **Confidence** (self-efficacy)

**FAMILY AND STAFF CAPACITY OUTCOMES**

School and Program Staff who can
- Honor and recognize families' funds of knowledge
- Connect family engagement to student learning
- Create welcoming, inviting cultures

**Effective Family–School Partnerships Supporting Student Achievement & School Improvement**

Families who can negotiate multiple roles
- Supporters
- Encouragers
- Monitors
- Advocates
- Decision Makers
- Collaborators

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initiatives must include a concerted focus on developing adult capacity, whether through pre- and in-service professional development for educators; academies, workshops, seminars, and workplace trainings for families; or as an integrated part of parent–teacher partnership activities. When effectively implemented, such opportunities build and enhance the skills, knowledge, and dispositions of stakeholders to engage in effective partnerships that support student achievement and development and school improvement.

## Opportunity Conditions

There are many types of effective capacity-building opportunities for LEA staff and families, some of which are explored in the case studies described in the next section. Opportunities must be tailored to the particular contexts for which they are developed. At the same time, research suggests that certain *process conditions* must be met for adult participants to come away from a learning experience not only with new knowledge but with the ability and desire to apply what they have learned. Research also suggests important *organizational conditions* that have to be met in order to sustain and scale these opportunity efforts across districts and groups of schools.

### Process Conditions

Research on promising practice in family engagement, as well as on adult learning and development, identifies a set of process conditions that are important to the success of capacity-building interventions. The term *process* here refers to the series of actions, operations, and procedures that are part of any activity or initiative. Process conditions are key to the design of effective initiatives for building the capacity of families and school staff to partner in ways that support student achievement and school improvement. Initiatives must be:

### Linked to Learning

**Initiatives are aligned with school and district achievement goals and connect families to the teaching and learning goals for the students.** Far too often, events held at schools for parents have little to do with the school or district's academic and developmental goals for students. These events are missed opportunities to enhance the capacity of families and staff to collaborate with one another to support student learning. Families and school staff are more interested in and motivated to participate in events and programs that are focused on enhancing their abil-

ity to work as partners to support children's cognitive, emotional, physical, and social development as well as the overall improvement of the school.

### Relational

**A major focus of the initiative is on building respectful and trusting relationships between home and school.** No meaningful family engagement can be established until relationships of trust and respect are established between home and school. A focus on relationship building is especially important in circumstances where there has been a history of mistrust between families and school or district staff, or where negative past experiences or feelings of intimidation hamper the building of partnerships between staff and parents. In these cases, mailings, automated phone calls, and even incentives like meals and prizes for attendance do little to ensure regular participation of families, and school staff are often less than enthusiastic about participating in these events. The *relationship* between home and school serves as the foundation for shared learning and responsibility and also acts as an incentive and motivating agent for the continued participation of families and staff. Participants in initiatives are more willing to learn from others whom they respect and trust.

### Developmental

**The initiatives focus on building the intellectual, social, and human capital of stakeholders engaged in the program.** Providing support to communities is important, but initiatives that build capacity set out to provide opportunities for participants (both families and school staff) to think differently about themselves and their roles as stakeholders in their schools and communities.[17] In addition to providing services to stakeholders, the developmental component of these initiatives focuses on empowering and enabling participants to be confident, active, knowledgeable, and informed stakeholders in the transformation of their schools and neighborhoods.

### Collective/Collaborative

**Learning is conducted in group rather than individual settings and is focused on building learning communities and networks.** Initiatives that bring families and staff together for shared learning create collective learning environments that foster peer learning and communications networks among families and staff. The collective, collaborative nature of these initiatives builds social networks, connections, and, ultimately, the social capital of families and staff in the program.

## Interactive

**Participants are given opportunities to test out and apply new skills.** Skill mastery requires coaching and practice. Existing family engagement strategies often involve providing lists of items and activities for teachers to use to reach out to families and for families to do with their children. This information dissemination strategy is an important but insufficient condition of learning and knowledge acquisition. During learning sessions, staff and families can receive information on skills and tools, but must also have the opportunity to practice what they have learned and receive feedback and coaching from each other, peers, and facilitators.

## Organizational Conditions

As organizations, LEAs and schools struggle to create family–school partnership opportunities that are coherent and aligned with educational improvement goals, sustained over time, and spread across the district. Research on the conditions necessary for educational entities to successfully implement and sustain family engagement identifies the following organizational conditions that support fidelity and sustainability.[18] Initiatives must be:

## Systemic

**Initiatives are purposefully designed as core components of educational goals such as school readiness, student achievement, and school turnaround.** Family–school partnerships are seen as essential supports[19] to school and district improvement and are elevated to a high priority across state, district, and school improvement plans.

## Integrated

**Capacity-building efforts are embedded into structures and processes such as training and professional development, teaching and learning, curriculum, and community collaboration.** A district or school's efforts to build the capacity of families and staff to form effective partnerships are integrated into all aspects of its improvement strategy, such as the recruitment and training of effective teachers and school leaders, professional development, and mechanisms of evaluation and assessment.

## Sustained

**Programs operate with adequate resources and infrastructure support.** Multiple funding streams are resourced to fund initiatives, and senior-level district leadership is empowered to coordinate family–school

partnership strategies and initiatives as a component of the overall improvement strategy. School leaders are committed to and have a systemic vision of family engagement and family–school partnerships.

## Policy and Program Goals

The Framework builds on existing research suggesting that partnerships between home and school can only develop and thrive if both families and staff have the requisite collective capacity to engage in partnership.[20] Many school and district family engagement initiatives focus solely on providing workshops and seminars for families on how to engage more effectively in their children's education. This focus on families alone often results in increased tension between families and school staff: families are trained to be more active in their children's schools, only to be met by an unreceptive and unwelcoming school climate and resistance from district and school staff to their efforts for more active engagement. Therefore, policies and programs directed at improving family engagement must focus on building the capacities of both staff and families to engage in partnerships.

Following the work of Higgins,[21] we break down capacity into four components—the "4 Cs":

## Capabilities: Human Capital, Skills, and Knowledge

School and district staff need to be knowledgeable about the assets and funds of knowledge available in the communities where they work. They also need skills in the realms of cultural competency and of building trusting relationship with families. Families need access to knowledge about student learning and the workings of the school system. They also need skills in advocacy and educational support.

## Connections: Important Relationships and Networks—Social Capital

Staff and families need access to social capital through strong, cross-cultural networks built on trust and respect. These networks should include family–teacher relationships, parent–parent relationships, and connections with community agencies and services.

## Confidence: Individual Level of Self-Efficacy

Staff and families need a sense of comfort and

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self-efficacy related to engaging in partnership activities and working across lines of cultural difference.

## Cognition: Assumptions, Beliefs, and Worldview

Staff need to be committed to working as partners with families and must believe in the value of such partnerships for improving student learning. Families need to view themselves as partners in their children's education, and must construct their roles in their children's learning to include the multiple roles described in the Framework.

The Framework suggests that before effective home–school partnerships can be achieved at scale and sustained, these four components of partnership capacity must be enhanced among district/school staff and families.

The 4 Cs can also be used to develop a set of criteria from which to identify metrics to measure and evaluate policy and program effectiveness.[22] Examples of criteria aligned with the 4 Cs for both family and staff are included in the final section of this report.

## Staff and Family Partnership Outcomes

Once staff and families have built the requisite capabilities, connections, confidence, and cognition, they will be able to engage in partnerships that will support student achievement and student learning.

Staff who are prepared to engage in partnerships with families can:

- honor and recognize families' existing knowledge, skill, and forms of engagement;
- create and sustain school and district cultures that welcome, invite, and promote family engagement; and
- develop family engagement initiatives and connect them to student learning and development.

Families who, regardless of their racial or ethnic identity, educational background, gender, disability, or socioeconomic status, are prepared to engage in partnerships with school and districts can engage in diverse roles such as:

- *Supporters* of their children's learning and development
- *Encouragers* of an achievement identity, a positive self image, and a "can do" spirit in their children
- *Monitors* of their children's time, behavior, boundaries, and resources
- *Models* of lifelong learning and enthusiasm for education
- *Advocates/Activists* for improved learning opportunities for their children and at their schools
- *Decision-makers/choosers* of educational options for their children, the school, and their community
- *Collaborators* with school staff and other members of the community on issues of school improvement and reform

As a result of this enhanced capacity on the part of families, districts and schools are able to cultivate and sustain active, respectful, and effective partnerships with families that foster school improvement, link to educational objectives, and support children's learning and development.

The Framework builds on existing research suggesting that partnerships between home and school can only develop and thrive if both families and staff have the requisite collective capacity to engage in partnership.

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# II. Intervention Phases and Tasks

**Organizing Schools to Enhance**
    **Home Involvement**

**Inviting Involvement**

**Facilitating Early Involvement**

**Maintaining Involvement**

**Using Evaluation Data for Improving Intervention**

*For parent involvement initiatives
to be successful, they should be part
of a contextually focused school
improvement process designed to
create positive relationships that
support children's total development.*
Comer & Haynes

As the discussion in Part I underscores, it is useful procedurally to think about intervention as encompassing sets of sequential phases and tasks. The concept of sequential phases is meant to capture the idea of starting with the best general practices and moving on to more specialized interventions as needed and feasible. Thus, our three phase sequence begins with a broadband focus. This involves general institutional procedures designed to recruit and facilitate participation of all who are ready, willing, and able. Then, the focus narrows to those who need just a bit more personalized contact (e.g., personal letters, phone invitations, highlighted information, contact and ongoing support from other parents) or a few more options to make participation more attractive. After this, to the degree feasible, the focus further narrows to parents or caretakers who remain uninvolved or difficult, such as those with an intense lack of interest or negative attitudes toward the school. The strategies in these cases continue to emphasize personalized contacts with the addition of as many cost intensive special procedures as can be afforded.

*Schools determined to enhance home involvement must be clear as
to their intent and the types of involvement they want to foster.*

*Then, they must establish and maintain mechanisms to carry out
intervention phases and tasks in a sequential manner.*

The enhancement of parent knowledge, attitudes, and skills for involvement should be approached as a matter of establishing a good match, developmentally and motivationally. That is, the procedures should be designed to meet participants (including persons who are hard to connect with) "where they are at."

Interventions to develop home-school partnerships should begin when a student enters school. And, assuming the school is ready to share power,* the ultimate objective should be to help parents develop the interest and capability to assume a partnership role. Major tasks to be planned, implemented, and evaluated include

- organizing for involvement

- inviting involvement (e.g., outreach)

- facilitating involvement

- maintaining involvement.

In terms of specific procedures, besides ways to overcome institutional, personal, and impersonal barriers, the intervention should include procedures aimed at

- providing opportunities to participate in different *ways*, at different *levels*, and to different *degrees* (even minimal involvement should be legitimized)

- enhancing motivation to participate

- accommodating differences in functional capability

- enhancing participation skills.

With respect to recruiting school staff to accomplish all this, it seems best to start with those who are already motivated and add others as the success of the activity leads to interest on their part.

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*It is essential to recognize that successful development of home-school partnerships will produce continuing changes in power relationships that will alter the ways policy and program decisions are made. Those with current responsibility for school and district governance must be prepared to accept and facilitate such change. If they are not prepared to do so, a true partnership cannot be achieved and should not be viewed as the ultimate objective of efforts to increase home involvement.

# Organizing Schools to Enhance Home Involvement

Currently, all school districts are committed to some form of home involvement. Unfortunately, limited finances often mean that verbal commitments are not backed up with the resources necessary to underwrite programs. Regardless of district support, if homes are to become significantly involved at a school, research and experience suggest the following: on-site decision makers must (a) be committed to involving those in the home, (b) be clear about specific intent, (c) offer a range of ways for individuals to be involved, (d) be clear about what is required in recruiting, initiating and maintaining involvement, and (e) establish and institutionalize effective mechanisms dedicated to home involvement.

As a first step, each school must come to grips with why and how they want to enhance home involvement and the implications of doing so. For instance, it is essential to recognize that successful efforts to increase such involvement may trigger a series of changes in power relationships. If the school actually is ready to share power, a developmental process is required that fosters parent interest and the specific skills needed to assume and maintain a decision making partnership. If those with current responsibility for school and district governance are not prepared to share their power, then they probably should not describe their intent as that of creating a home-school partnership. References to partnerships suggest parents will have a major role to play in decision making, and this is not likely to happen when the school's intent is mainly to have parents rubber stamp predefined objectives and processes.

On-site decision makers probably should write out their rationale for involving the home and outline a range of initial and future participation options. Such documents would be of value not only to program developers, but to researchers and those concerned with public policy. These statements can be especially useful if they address such basic questions as: Is the intent just to use parents to facilitate school objectives or will some activities be designed primarily to benefit parents (e.g., personal interest and support groups)? How much power should be ceded to parents? For instance, is the eventual intent to involve interested parents fully in decision making councils?

Once a rationale and outline of options are clarified, the next crucial step is to establish institutional mechanisms for carrying out plans to enhance home involvement -- including ways to overcome institutional barriers. Logically, a major focus is on mechanisms to recruit, train, and maintain a cadre of staff, and perhaps some parents, who have relevant interests and competence. Implied in all this is a lengthy commitment of significant resources.

# Inviting Involvement

From the perspective of cognitive-affective theories of motivation, a key intervention concern is how those in the home perceive the school. Three concerns of particular importance with respect to involving the home are whether the general atmosphere at the school is perceived as a welcoming one, whether the school is perceived as specifically inviting involvement, and whether specific contacts are experienced as positive.

It is not uncommon for parents to feel unwelcome at school. The problem can begin with their first contacts. It apparently is a familiar experience to encounter school office staff and student assistants whose demeanor seems unfriendly. The problem may be compounded by language barriers that make communication frustrating.

Beyond contacts with office staff, many parents come to school mainly when they are called in to discuss their child's learning or behavior difficulties. It is hard for even the most determined school personnel to dispel the discomfort of parents during such discussions.

Parents who feel unwelcome or "called on the carpet" cannot be expected to view the school as an inviting setting. Schools that want to facilitate positive involvement must both counter factors that make the setting uninviting and develop ways to make it attractive to parents. We have come to think of this as the welcoming or invitation problem.

From a psychological perspective, the invitation problem is seen as requiring strategies that address attitudes school staff, students, and parents hold regarding home involvement. That is, in most cases, involvement probably is best facilitated when attitudes are positive rather than neutral or, worse yet, hostile. And, positive attitudes about home involvement seem most likely when those concerned perceive personal benefits as outweighing potential costs (psychological and tangible).

Addressing the invitation problem begins with efforts to ensure most communications and interactions between school personnel and home convey a welcoming tone. It is reasonable to assume that a major way a staff's attitude about home involvement is conveyed is through a school's formal communications with the home and the procedures used to reach out to specific individuals. In addition, informal interactions between personnel and parents can be expected to reinforce or counter the impact of formal contacts.

Based on these assumptions, a primary focus of interventions designed to address the invitation problem should be on establishing formal mechanisms that (a) convey a general sense of welcome to all parents and (b) extend a personalized invitation to those who appear to need something more.

## General Welcoming

Schools tend to rely heavily on formal dialogues and written statements in interacting and communicating with parents. As immigrant populations increase such processes are adapted to account at least for different languages. For example, attempts have been made to supply office staff with resources for communicating with non-English speaking parents. Such resources might include providing welcoming messages and introductory information in various languages through (1) written materials, (2) a cadre of foreign language speakers who can be called upon when needed, such as on-site staff and students or district personnel and community volunteers reachable by phone, and (3) video and computer programs.

Efforts to account for language differences as well as differences in literacy when communicating with parents clearly are essential prerequisites to making the school inviting. At the same time, the specific information communicated needs to be expressed in ways that convey positive attitudes toward parents and toward home involvement with the school. More generally, some school staff may require specific training to appreciate the importance of and how to maintain positive formal and informal interactions with parents and caretakers.

A special welcoming problem arises around newly enrolled students and their families -- especially those who enroll during the school year. Schools need to delineate steps for greeting new families, giving them essential orientation information, and encouraging involvement in on-going activities. Such steps might include a "Welcome Packet for Newcomers" and introductory conferences with the principal, the student's teacher, other staff resources, and parent representatives -- with emphases both on welcoming and involving them.

## Special invitations

Invitations to the home come in two forms: (1) general communications such as mass distribution of flyers, newsletters, classroom announcements, and form letters and (2) special, personalized contacts such as personal notes from the teacher, invitations a student makes and takes home, and interchanges at school, over the phone, or during a home visit. Parents who fail to respond to repeated general invitations to become involved may not appreciate what is available. Or, there may be obstacles to their involvement. Whatever the reasons, the next logical step is to extend special invitations and increase personalized contact.

Special invitations can range from simple approaches, such as a note or a call, to cost intensive processes, such as a home visit. These are directed at designated individuals and are intended to overcome personal attitudinal barriers and can be used to elicit information about persisting personal and impersonal barriers. For example, one simple approach is to send a *personal* request to targeted parents. The request may invite them to a specific event such as a parent-teacher conference, a school performance involving their child, a parenting workshop, or a parent support group. Or it may ask for greater involvement at home to facilitate their child's learning such as providing enrichment opportunities or basic help with homework. If the parents still are not responsive, the next special invitation might call for a "RSVP" and ask for an indication of any obstacles interfering with involvement.

When those at home indicate obstacles, the problem moves beyond invitations. Overcoming personal and impersonal barriers requires facilitative strategies.

# Facilitating Early Involvement

As with the invitation step, the sequence of intervention phases for facilitating early involvement range from general institutional mechanisms to special personalized procedures. The sequence begins with general strategies to inform, encourage, provide support for overcoming barriers, and so forth. For example, most schools recognize the need to send frequent reminders. Another fundamental reality is that working parents have relatively few hours to devote to school involvement. Labor statistics suggest that as few as 7% of school-aged children live in a two parent household where there is only one wage earner. Thus, it is essential to accommodate a variety of parent schedules and to provide for child care in establishing parent activities.

Beyond addressing barriers, involvement activities must be designed to account for a wide range of individual differences in interest and capability among those in the home and among school personnel. The diversity of knowledge, attitudes, and skills requires options for those in the home, and for school staff, that allow for participation in different *ways* and at different *levels* and *frequencies*. For example, it seems particularly important to legitimize initial minimal degrees of involvement for certain homes and to support frequent changes in the nature and scope of involvement.

In general, to address individual differences, facilitation must

- ensure there are a variety of ways to participate

- sanction home participation in any option and to the degree feasible

- account for cultural and individual diversity

- enable participation of those with minimal skills
- provide support to improve participation skills.

Parents who already are involved could play a major role in all these facilitative efforts.

At this point, it seems relevant to reemphasize the importance of not thinking of all home involvement as school-based. In particular, the prime involvement of parents who work all day may be in helping their child with homework and for children to help with family tasks. This may be an especially fruitful area in which to facilitate home-school collaboration through establishing good channels of communication, a supportive working relationship, and mutual respect.

For many, the general strategies already described are sufficient. For some, however, additional outreach and support are necessary. In this regard, it may be best to start with individuals who seem somewhat approachable and whose obstacles are not intractable, and then to move on to others as soon as feasible.

Personalized interventions might focus, for example, on a parent's negative attitude toward participating in existing options. A significant number of parents view efforts to involve them at school as not worth the time or effort or view the school as hostile, controlling, or indifferent. Exceptional efforts may be required before an extremely negative parent will perceive the school as supportive and view involvement as personally beneficial.

In cases where a parent's negative attitude stems from skill deficits (e.g., doesn't speak English, lacks skills to help with homework), the option of a skill group is a relatively easy one to offer. The larger facilitative problem, however, is to do so in a way that minimizes stigma and maximizes intrinsic motivation. Some reluctant parents may be reached, initially, by offering them an activity designed to give them additional personal support, such as a mutual interest group composed of parents with the same cultural background or a mutual support group (e.g., see Appendix B). Such groups might even meet away from the school at a time when working parents can participate. In such cases, the school's role is to help initiate the groups and provide consultation as needed.

## ATTRACTING PARENTS TO AN EVENT AT SCHOOL

Many parents, especially those whose contacts with school have not been positive, only come to school voluntarily for very special events. A variety of special events might be used to attract parents. Two types of activities that seem to have drawing power are those where a parent can see her or his child perform or receive positive recognition and those where parents can gain a sense of personal support and accomplishment.

With respect to support, one form can be parent discussion groups (e.g., 3 sessions) where fundamentals of handling child-rearing and school problems are explored and information about services available for students with problems is provided. Topics in which parents are interested include "Helping your child do better at school," "Helping the school do more for your child," and "Finding better ways to deal with problems at home and at school." Self-led mutual support groups are another possibility.

Examples of other events that schools find successful in attracting parents are support groups, friendship circles, ESL classes for parents, citizenship classes, and special projects to help the school.

Whatever the event:

> *Remember, first and foremost, it should be an activity that parents are likely to perceive and experience as positive and valuable.*

(cont.)

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Once a special event is identified, the following steps can be taken.

*Arrange with the principal and other involved school staff for times and places.*

A major consideration is whether the event will take place during the school day or in the evening; in some cases, it may be feasible to offer the event both during the day and again at night to accommodate a wider range of parent schedules.

*Plan the specifics of the event.*

For example, in the case of discussion groups, group leaders are identified, topics for discussion identified, materials to stimulate discussion prepared, child care volunteers and activities identified, and so forth.

*Distribute general announcements.*

Flyers are sent home, posted, distributed at pick up time; announcements are made at existing parent activities. All announcements should account for the primary languages spoken by parents at the school. (See Resource Aids.)

*Extend personal invitations.*

Three types of personal invitation seem worth pursuing -- mailing a letter home, preparing an invitation and RSVP that the student can take home, and calling the parent with a reminder. (See Resource Aids.) In extreme cases, a home visit may be worth trying.

*Accommodate differences and needs*

In addition to offering the event at different times of the day, efforts need to be made to accommodate those parents whose primary language is not English.

Child care at the site might be offered so that parents who cannot leave their children at home can participate in an event without distraction. Efforts also might be made to help organize car pools.

*Ensure that each parent is received positively.*

Efforts should be made to ensure that parents are extended a personalized greeting when they sign-in at the event. If there are parents present who are already involved at school, they can help makr new parents feel accepted by taking them "under their wings" (e.g., orient them, introduce them to others).

# INTRODUCING OTHER OPPORTUNITIES FOR SUPPORTIVE PARENT INVOLVEMENT

Toward the conclusion of the event (e.g., during the last scheduled session of group discussions), parents can be introduced to other endeavors the school offers as part of its efforts to establish a positive home-school partnership.

This step encompasses a general presentation of ways parents can become involved in such endeavors, encouraging expressions of interest, and clarifying reasons for lack of interest.

### *Presentations of Opportunities for Involvement

> The emphasis here is on a vivid and impactful presentation of the various ways families can be involved. Posters, handouts, testimonials, slides, videos, products -- anything that will bring the activity to life might be used.

> Such a presentation can be made by a school administrator or staff member or by parent representatives. In either case, it is useful to invite parent participants from various activities to come and tell about the endeavor and extend an invitation to join.

### *Encouragement of Expressions of Interest

> It is important to take time specifically to identify which parents are interested in any of the described endeavors and encourage them to sign up so that a follow-up contact can be made.

> It also is important to identify any barriers that will interfere with a parent pursuing an interest and to explore ways such barriers can be overcome.

### *Clarification of Lack of Interest

> For those who have not indicated an interest, a "needs assessment" should be done to identify what they would like from the school and/or barriers to their involvement. This might be done informally after the presentation or through a follow-up phone or mail questionnaire (see Resource Aids).

> Similarly, for those who did not come to the special event, a personal (phone/mail) contact should be made to identify and address reasons why.

## Maintaining Involvement

Available evidence indicates that there is a significant decrease in parent involvement as students get older. The causes of this decrease have not been established, but it is associated with a decline in intervention efforts. Thus, as difficult as it is to involve some homes initially, keeping them involved may be even a more difficult matter.

Maintaining involvement can be seen as a problem of sustaining and enhancing intrinsic motivation. Extrapolating from available research on intrinsic motivation, three strategies for maintaining involvement seem basic:

- continuing to provide and vary a range of valued ways individuals can be involved

- facilitating their decision making among available options -- including decisions to add or move from one to another

- providing continuous support for learning, growth, and success -- including feedback about how involvement is personally benefitting the participant.

Beyond specific strategies, however, maintaining involvement may depend on the school's commitment to creating a psychological sense of community at the school and empowering the home.

After parents have been involved with the school for a while, it is time to offer them the opportunity to learn how to effectively work in partnership with the school. The aim of such a partnership is to improve the quality of education for their children specifically and all children in general. Toward this end, efforts must be directed at facilitating

- parents' development and motivation with respect to acquiring the requisite information and skills for participating effectively

- parents' involvement in decision making processes at school

- parents' participation in the implementation of certain decisions

- continuing evolution of the partnership.

# Toward A Partnership

*Facilitating Parent Acquisition of Participation*
  *Information and Skills*

> Some parents will not have the requisite information and skills to participate effectively. This may account for the reluctance of some to become involved. The absence of some skills, such as the ability to speak English, can be accommodated (e.g., through use of interpreters). In many cases, however, it is desirable to offer ways for parents to acquire the information and skills they may be missing.

> One way this might be accomplished is for the principal or some other staff member to offer a course (e.g., once a week meetings over a 6 week period). The emphasis of such a course should be on what it takes for parents to become real partners in helping the school do more for their child and other students.

*Parent Involvement in School Decision Making*

> As parents are ready (want to and have developed at least the minimal requisite skills), they should be encouraged to join regularly scheduled decision making forums. At this point, it is necessary to define formally their position (e.g., advisory only, equal power in decision making).

*Parent Participation in Implementing Decisions*

> Clearly, many school decisions must be carried out by staff members. Parents can and should play a role, however, in helping to implement some decisions (e.g., fund raising, advocacy for policies and programs).

*Facilitating Continued Growth of the Partnership*

> Periodic follow-up workshops can be held to enhance parent and staff abilities for and revitalize their commitment to carrying out partnership responsibilities.

# Using Evaluation Data for Improving Intervention

Many staff members find evaluation to be an unpleasant and often time wasting experience. It certainly can be all that and more.

On the other hand, properly designed evaluation can provide the type of information that ensures one gets credit (and support) for all that is done and allows one to show pride in what is accomplished. Think in terms of

    (1)  what information seems important to gather regularly in order to show that the component is needed and is doing a good job, and

    (2)  what procedures may be useful in gathering and summarizing such information.

It helps to start by clarifying for yourself and for others what you are trying to accomplish. What is the rationale for having the parent component? What outcomes do you realistically expect to achieve?

And, it is important to think about outcomes broadly and programmatically. Obviously, in the long-run, you want to help individual students overcome their problems through an improved home-school partnership. This, of course, is the ultimate and most difficult outcome to evaluate.

Just as program development progresses in phases, there is a need to approach evaluation in stages. For new and evolving large-scale interventions, the first stages of evaluation must be formative and stress the type of *research and development* activity that produces a sound program. Thus, in these early stages, evaluation procedures must be extremely broad and embody the dynamic, spiraling quality of evaluative *research*. To this end, the evaluation activity must be programmatic, with the initial emphasis broadly focused on improving intervention processes (e.g., clarifying the nature and soundness of the intervention rationale, procedures, intended outcomes, and immediate accomplishments).

As the initial stages are accomplished and a program is operating properly, the emphasis moves to an in-depth focus on validating interventions in terms of specific efficacy. To this end, in-depth sampling becomes a viable strategy for studying intervention efficacy. At these later stages of evaluation, data from other schools with parent involvement programs and from settings without such programs provide important comparison information for arriving at evaluative judgments.

## Monitoring: Early Stages

In the first stages, evaluation essentially involves describing the parent component's rationale and current activity. For example, significant amounts of time must be spent initially identifying and recruiting parents and planning, implementing and evaluating the parent component. All such activity should be documented along with clarification of the immediate results of the activity. Thus, the focus of evaluation is on providing

- a clear statement of the component's rationale and objectives

- needs assessment data

- a summary of specific activities (e.g., recruitment of parents, details on parent involvement events, procedures for maintaining parent involvement, procedures for enhancing home-school partnerships, evaluation activity)

- number and nature of participating parents

- feedback on parent satisfaction with involvement and their reports on the positive and negative impact on them and their child

- other data on parent involvement at school

- data on the school's home-school partnership activity.

The necessary data can be gathered from

- written program descriptions

- daily log records

- parent interview questionnaires and feedback ratings

- teacher and other staff ratings of parent involvement at school

Examples of data gathering tools are provided in this packet.

Monitoring: Later Stages


In the later stages, evaluation focuses on the diffusion of home involvement efforts and on assessing impact more broadly and over time. For example, questionnaires can be used to document whether the programmatic activity has been maintained. And, in addition to data gathered during initial stages, retrospective evaluations of processes and outcomes can be gathered by a follow-up questionnaire sent to school staff and those in the home at a given period of time (e.g., at 6 month intervals).


Furthermore, in evaluating impact on students, an independent check of school records can be used to compare school attendance pre and post introduction of the interventions, and similarly, teacher and parent ratings can be solicited to make pre and post comparisons with respect to student's learning and behavior.


Given the necessary resources, follow-up data on status of parent participants and their children should be gathered yearly (to minimize attrition due to loss of mail contact). To minimize costs, the focus might be on subsamples representing specific problems evaluated in-depth.

# III. About Standards and Outcomes

A. Introduction

B. National PTA Standards for Parent/
 Family Involvement Programs

C. A Sampling of Research Relevant to Home
 Involvement in Schooling

D. Frequently Cited Outcomes

## III. About Standards and Outcomes

### A. Introduction

Our Center categorizes home involvement and engagement in schooling as one of six major arenas of activity that are essential to school improvement. In highlighting programs, services, and initiatives related to each arena, we do so mainly to provide a perspective on current activity. We do not advocate adopting a single "model" program to address the complex needs schools have in an arena such as home involvement and engagement.

Indeed, a constant concern we have is about the ongoing and constant advocacy and lobbying for specific and competing agenda exacerbates these problems. Too often such advocacy results in counterproductive competition for sparse resources. And too often such advocacy contributes to fragmentation that characterizes efforts to meet many needs of students, their families, and the school. The result has been the ongoing *marginalization* in school policy, planning, and practices of the arena of home involvement and engagement (as well as the other five arenas we categorize for addressing barriers to learning and teaching).

The reality is that schools are confronted daily with multiple, interrelated concerns that require multiple and interrelated solutions. These include a host of neighborhood, family, schooling, peer, and personal factors. Interrelated solutions require various forms of collaboration. Thus, schools must transform how they connect with homes and communities so they can work together in pursuing shared goals related to the general well-being of the young and society. Establishing such collaboration calls for more than a a parent education program, a parent center, an adult literacy program, etc.

# III. About Standards and Outcomes

## B. National PTA Standards for Family-School Partnerships

*Standard 1: Welcoming All Families into the School Community*
http://www.pta.org/files/Assessment_Guide_Standard_1.pdf
Families are active participants in the life of the school, and feel welcomed, valued, and connected to each other, to school staff, and to what students are learning and doing in class.

*Standard 2: Communicating Effectively* http://www.pta.org/files/Assessment_Guide_Standard_2.pdf
Families and school staff engage in regular, two-way, meaningful communication about student learning.

*Standard 3: Supporting Student Success* http://www.pta.org/files/Assessment_Guide_Standard_3.pdf
Families and school staff continuously collaborate to support students' learning and healthy development both at home and at school, and have regular opportunities to strengthen their knowledge and skills to do so effectively.

*Standard 4: Speaking Up for Every Child* http://www.pta.org/files/Assessment_Guide_Standard_4.pdf
Families are empowered to be advocates for their own and other children, to ensure that students are treated fairly and have access to learning opportunities that will support their success.

*Standard 5: Sharing Power* http://www.pta.org/files/Assessment_Guide_Standard_5.pdf
Families and school staff are equal partners in decisions that affect children and families and together inform, influence, and create policies, practices, and programs.

*Standard 6: Collaborating with Community* http://www.pta.org/files/Assessment_Guide_Standard_6.pdf
Families and school staff collaborate with community members to connect students, families, and staff to expanded learning opportunities, community services, and civic participation.

**Background**

Report: *The Positive Relationship Between Family Involvement and Student Success*
http://www.pta.org/programs/content.cfm?ItemNumber=1459 A discussion of the finding connecting parent involvement to higher levels of student achievement.

*National Standards for Family-School Partnerships* http://www.pta.org/files/National_Standards.pdf
What parents, schools, and communities can do together to support student success.

**Related Resources**

*A Parent Checklist* http://www.pta.org/files/EMBARGOED%20Parent%20Check%20List.pdf
This guide provides families with questions, tips and resources to use to partner with their children's teachers, support their children's success, and make sure their children are getting a high-quality education.

*Family Guide to Getting Involved With Correctional Education (NDTAC): Example of the Standards in Action* http://www.neglected-delinquent.org/nd/resources/spotlight/familyGuide2008.asp
This guide was written for individuals with children who have been placed in a juvenile justice facility.

*Action Steps for the Local PTA Leader* http://www.pta.org/files/National_Standards_Flier.pdf

*Estándares Nacionales para la Asociación de la Familia y la Escuela por PTA: acciones para el líder local de PTA* http://www.pta.org/files/National_Standard_Action_Steps_Flier-Spanish.pdf

For more, go to http://www.pta.org/nationalstandards .

# III. About Standards and Outcomes

## C. A Sampling of Research Relevant to Home Involvement in Schooling

Our Center categorizes home involvement and engagement in schooling as one of six major arenas of activity that are essential to school improvement. We stress that schools need a system of interventions  (not just a program) that (1) addresses specific learning and support needs of adults in the home, (2) helps those in the home meet their basic obligations to the student, (3) improves communication about matters essential to the student and family, (4) enhances the home-school connection and a sense of community, (5) enhances participation in making decision that are essential to the student, (6) enhances home support related to the student's basic learning and development, (7) mobilizes those at home to problem solve related to student needs, (8) elicits help (support, collaborations, and partnerships) from those at home with respect to meeting classroom, school, and community needs, and more. (See Survey include in this packet for a tool that focuses on all this.)

On the following pages, we highlight some " model programs." We do so mainly to indicate that there is empirical support for addressing the various facets we have outlined and to provide a perspective on the types of interventions that are being used. We do not advocate adopting a single program to address the complex needs schools have in an arena such as home involvement and engagement.
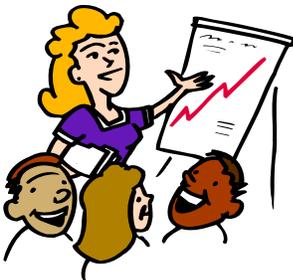
In general, research findings over the past 40 years have consistently shown home involvement in schooling has a positive impact on youngster's attitudes, aspirations, and achievement. In particular, more intensive efforts must focus on those in the home who have the greatest influence on a student's well being and with whom it has proven difficult to connect. New approaches must be developed and evaluated to clarify how best to involve such hard-to-reach individuals (e.g., perhaps by starting with strategies that address their needs, as contrasted with trying to make them take greater responsibility for their children's problems).

The sample of research reports and reviews provided on the following pages all underscore the promise of home involvement and engagement in schooling. At the same time, it is clear there is much more to be done.

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# A Sample of Reports and Reviews

Child Trends. (2013). *Parental involvement in schools*. http://www.childtrends.org/?indicators=parental-involvement-in-schools - See more at: http://www.childtrends.org/?indicators=parental-involvement-in-schools#sthash.eQFMoYSK.dpuf

Crosnoe, R., and Cooper, C. E. (2010). Economically disadvantaged children's transitions into elementary school: Linking family processes, school contexts, and educational policy.*American Educational Research Journal, 47*(2), 258-291.

Durand, T. M. (2011). Latino parental involvement in kindergarten: Findings from the Early Childhood Longitudinal Study. *Hispanic Journal of Behavioral Sciences, 33,* 469-489

El Nokali, N. E., Bachman, H. J., & Votruba-Drzal, E. (2010). Parent involvement and children's academic and social development in elementary school. *Child Development, 81*(3), 988-1005.

Epstein, J. L. (2011). *School, family, and community partnerships: Preparing educators and improving schools* (2nd ed.). Boulder, CO: Westview Press.

Epstein, J. L., Sanders, M. G., Sheldon, S., Simon, B. S., Salinas, K. C., Jansorn, N. R. (Rodriquez), Van Voorhis, F. L., Martin, C. S., Thomas, B. G., Greenfield, M. D., Hutchins, D. J., and Williams, K. J. (2009). *School, family, and community partnerships: Your handbook for action* (3rd ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin Press.

Galindo, C., and Sheldon, S. B. (2012). School and home connections and children's kindergarten achievement gains: The mediating role of family involvement. *Early Childhood Research Quarterly, 27,* 90-103.

Henderson, A. T. & Mapp, K. L. (2002). *A New Wave of Evidence: The Impact of School, Family, and Community Connections on Student Achievement:* Southwest Educational Development Laboratory. http://www.sedl.org/connections/resources/evidence.pdf

Hill, N. E. & Tyson, D. F. (2009). Parental involvement in middle school: a meta-analytic assessment of the strategies that promote achievement. Developmental Psychology, 49(3), 740-763. - See more at: http://www.childtrends.org/?indicators=parental-involvement-in-schools#sthash.eQFMoYSK.dpuf

Hindman, A. H., and Morrison, F. J. (2012). Differential contributions of three parenting dimensions to preschool literacy and social skills in a middle-income sample. *Merrill-Palmer Quarterly, 58*(2), 191-223.

Jeynes, W. (2012). A meta-analysis of the efficacy of different types of parental involvement programs for urban students. *Urban Education, 47*(4), 706-742.

Landry, S. H., Smith, K. E., Swank, P. R., Zucker, T., Crawford, A. D., and Solari, E. F. (2012). The effects of a responsive parenting intervention on parent-child interactions during shared book reading. *Developmental Psychology, 48*(4), 969-986.

Mistry, R. S., Benner, A. D., Biesanz, J. C., and Clark, S. L. (2010). Family and social risk, and parental investments during the early childhood years as predictors of low-income children's school readiness outcomes. *Early Childhood Research Quarterly, 25*, 432-449.

Noble, K. G., Duch, H., Darvique, M. E., Grundleger, A., Rodriguez, C., and Landers, C. (2012). Getting ready for school: A preliminary evaluation of a parent-focused school readiness program. *Child Development Research, 2012*, 1-14. doi:10.1155/2012/259598.

Patel, N., and Stevens, S. (2010). Parent-teacher-student discrepancies in academic ability beliefs: Influences on parent involvement. *School Community Journal, 20*(2), 115-136.

Powell, D. R., Son, S-H., File, N., and San Juan, R. R. (2010). Parent-school relationships and children's academic and social outcomes in public school pre-kindergarten. *Journal of School Psychology, 48*, 269-292.

St. Clair, L., Jackson, B., and Zweiback, R. (2012). Six years later: Effect of family involvement training on the language skills of children from migrant families. *School Community Journal, 22*(1), 9-19.

Thomas, B. G., Greenfeld, M. D., Sender, C., and Hutchins, D. J. (eds.). (2012). *Promising partnership practices*. Baltimore: Center on School, Family, and Community Partnerships.

Van Voorhis, F. L. (2011). Costs and benefits of family involvement in homework: Lessons learned from students and families. *Journal of Advanced Academics, 22*, 220-249.

*Of note:*

The *National Registry of Evidence-based Programs and Practices* (NREPP) provides a searchable online database. The purpose of NREPP is to help the public learn more about available evidence-based programs and practices and determine which of these may best meet their needs. NREPP is one way that federal government is working to improve access to information on evaluated interventions and reduce the lag time between the creation of scientific knowledge and its practical application in the field. Use of NREPP as an exhaustive list of interventions is not appropriate, since NREPP has not reviewed all interventions. Policymakers and funders in particular are discouraged from limiting contracted providers and/or potential grantees to selecting only among NREPP interventions. All interventions in the registry have met NREPP's minimum requirements for review and have been independently assessed and rated for Quality of Research and Readiness for Dissemination. See examples of parent-focused interventions at http://nrepp.samhsa.gov/SearchResultsNew.aspx?s=b&q=Parents .

# III. About Programs

## *D. Frequently Cited Outcomes*

The following points from the review by Henderson & Mapp (2002) were made by the National Coalition for Parent Involvement in Education.  http://www.ncpie.org/WhatsHappening/researchJanuary2006.html

"Students with involved parents, no matter what their income or background, are more likely to:

- Earn higher grades and test scores, and enroll in higher-level programs
- Be promoted, pass their classes and earn credits
- Attend school regularly
- Have better social skills, show improved behavior and adapt well to school
- Graduate and go on to post-secondary education

Furthermore, studies show that families of all income and education levels, and from all ethnic and cultural groups, are engaged in supporting their children's learning at home. White, middle-class families, however, tend to be more involved at school, and to be better informed about how to help their children. Supporting more involvement at school from all families may be an important strategy for addressing the achievement gap.

**Programs and special efforts to engage families make a difference**

For example, teacher outreach to parents results in strong, consistent gains in student performance in both reading and math. Effective outreach practices include: meeting face to face, sending learning materials home, and keeping in touch about progress (Westat and Policy Studies Associates, 2001). Workshops for parents on helping their children at home are linked to higher reading and math scores (Shaver and Walls, 1998). Schools with highly rated partnership programs make greater gains on state tests than schools with lower-rated programs (Epstein and Sanders, 2000). (See also Clark, 1993 and Hoover-Dempsey and Sandler, 1997.)

**Higher performing schools effectively involve families and community**

Schools that succeed in engaging families from diverse backgrounds share three key practices:

- Focus on building trusting, collaborative relationships among teachers, families and community members
- Recognize, respect and address families' needs, as well as class and cultural differences
- Embrace a philosophy of partnership where power and responsibility are shared (Mapp, 2002; see also Chrispeels and Rivero, 2000)

**Parent and community organizing efforts are improving schools**

This type of engagement, which is based outside schools and led by parents and community members, is growing nationwide. Aimed mainly at low-performing schools, strategies of community organizing are openly focused on building low-income families' power and political skills. Unlike traditional parent involvement, parent and community organizing intends to hold schools accountable for results.

Recent studies have found that community organizing contributed to these changes in schools:

- upgraded school facilities
- improved school leadership and staffing
- higher quality learning programs for students
- new resources and programs to improve teaching and curriculum
- new funding for after-school programs and family supports
  (Mediratta and Fruchter, 2001; see also Gold, Simon and Brown, 2002)

### In Short

When parents talk to their children about school, expect them to do well, help them plan for college, and make sure that out-of-school activities are constructive, their children do better in school. When schools engage families in ways that are linked to improving learning, and support parent involvement at home and school, students make greater gains. When schools build partnerships with families that respond to their concerns, honor their contributions, and share power, they are able to sustain connections that are aimed at improving student achievement. And when families and communities organize to hold poorly performing schools accountable, school districts make positive changes in policy, practice, and resources.

### How Can Schools, Families and Community Groups Put these Findings into Action?

- Recognize that all parents, regardless of income, education or cultural background, are involved in their children's learning and want their children to do well.
- Design programs that will support families to guide their children's learning, from preschool through high school.
- Develop the capacity of school staff and families to work together.
- Link activities and programs for families to improving student learning.
- Focus on developing trusting and respectful relationships among staff and families.
- Build families' social and political connections.
- Embrace a philosophy of partnership and be willing to share power.
- Make sure that parents, school staff, and community members understand that the responsibility for children's educational development is a collaborative enterprise.
- Build strong connections between schools and community organizations.
- Include families in all strategies to reduce the achievement gap between white, middle-class students and low-income students and students of color."

**For the references, see** *A New Wave of Evidence: The Impact of School, Family and Community Connections on Student Achievement* by Henderson & Mapp (2002).

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In a 2007 review entitled "The How, Whom, and Why of Parents' Involvement in Children's Academic Lives: More is Not Always Better" published in the *Review of Educational Research,* Eva Pomerantz, Elizabeth Moorman, and Scott Litwack caution that while the emphasis in the research literature has been on increasing the extent of parent involvement, other factors should not be ignored. They make the case that "consideration of the how, whom, and why of parents' involvement ... is critical to maximizing its benefits." In addition, they suggest that such involvement "may matter more for some children than others.."

Eva Pomerantz, Elizabeth Moorman, & Scott Litwack (2007). The how, whom, and why of parents' involvement in children's academic lives: More is not always better. *Review of Educational Research, 77, 373-410.*

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*Note:*

Many organizations have drawn on the available research to stress the importance and value of home involvement and engagement. For example,Kentucky's Prichard Committee for Academic Excellence ( http://www.prichardcommittee.org/about-us ) has highlighted the "Benefits of Parent Involvement" as follows:

"Multiple studies over 40 years show that student achievement is positively impacted by parent involvement. Below is a summary.

When their parents are involved, STUDENTS gain:
- Higher grades and test scores
- Better attendance and more homework done
- Fewer placements in special education
- More positive attitudes and behavior
- Higher graduation rates
- Greater enrollment in post-secondary education

If their low-income parents were involved in their preschool program, students at age 19 are:
- 40 percent MORE likely to graduate from high school
- 35 percent MORE likely to be employed
- 55 percent LESS likely to be on welfare
- 40 percent LESS likely to have been arrested

Benefits of parent involvement for PARENTS:
- More confidence in the school
- Higher teacher expectations of their children
- Higher teacher opinions of them as parents
- More self-confidence
- More likely to continue their own education

Benefits of parent involvement for SCHOOLS:
- Improves teacher morale
- Higher ratings from families
- More support from families
- Higher student achievement
- Better reputations in the community"

## IV. Examples of Current Activity

A. Example of a State Department's Approach
and a Program Model

B. Major Organizational Resources

C. Family Needs Assessment (English and Spanish versions)

D. Resources for Promoting Family-School Partnerships

E. Activities for State and Local Educational Agencies

F. Preparing Teachers in Family Involvement

G. Engaging and Re-engaging Families When a Student
is Not Doing Well

# IV. Examples of Current Activity

## A. Example of a State Department's Approach and a Program Model

In 2004, the Michigan Dept. of Education issued a document entitled *Parent Engagement Information and Tools: Moving Beyond Parent Involvement to Parent Engagement*.
http://michigan.gov/documents/Parent_Involvement_Part_1_12-16-04_111426_7.pdf

The work includes the State Board of Education's Family Involvement Policy which states:

"The State Board of Education believes that the education of students is enhanced by the involvement of parents and families in their children's education. We advocate strong connections between the home, school, and the community as one means of reducing barriers to student achievement. Studies demonstrate that when parents are involved in their children's education, the attitudes, behaviors, and achievement of students are positively enhanced.

Education is an integral part of our society. It is important for all parties to be at the table, providing input and resources to better the learning outcomes for our students. Working in genuine partnerships is mutually beneficial. Developing cooperative efforts and meaningful involvement contribute to improved schools and successful students.

Schools must welcome the public's involvement, and recognize and tap the strengths, dynamism, and resources of all those who wish to participate with the schools in practical and tangible ways. Teacher training institutions also have a responsibility to provide training in family involvement.

The State Board of Education hereby recommends that every school district develop a Family Involvement Plan, which will engage families, educators, businesses, and other community members in education. Such plans will include outreach strategies, related home learning activities, community resources, and supportive school and district policies and actions.

The State Board of Education will disseminate model family involvement plans to assist local districts and school buildings in developing local plans."

Subsequently, the department developed the following toolkit.

**Michigan Department of Education**

## Collaborating for Success - Parent Engagement Toolkit (Updated 9/29/15)

*(for translated Toolkits in both Arabic and Spanish please scroll to the bottom of the webpage)*

http://www.michigan.gov/mde/0,4615,7-140-5233---,00.html

Parent Engagement is vital to student achievement and personal success.



"Collaborating For Success"
Parent Engagement Toolkit

According to research, the most accurate predictor of a student's achievement in school is not income or social status, but the extent to which that student's family is able to:

1. Create a home environment that encourages learning

2. Communicate high, yet reasonable, expectations for their children's achievement and future careers

3. Become involved in their children's education at school and in the community

These three seemingly simple steps require dedication and commitment from all students, parents, and school personnel. The resulting benefit of this investment in time and effort is well worth the future aspirations and success of every child. Please review the following list of Academic Benefits of Parent Engagement:

BENEFITS OF PARENT ENGAGEMENT

1. Students achieve more, regardless of socio-economic status, ethnic/racial background or the parents' education level.
2. Students have higher grades and test scores, better attendance, and complete homework more consistently.
3. Students have higher graduation rates and greater enrollment rates in post-secondary education.
4. Educators hold higher expectations of students whose parents collaborate with the teacher.
5. Student achievement for disadvantaged children not only improves, but can also reach levels that are standard for middle-class children. In addition, the children who are farthest behind make the greatest gains.
6. Children from diverse cultural backgrounds perform better when parents and professionals collaborate to bridge the gap between the culture at home and at the learning institution.
7. Student behaviors such as alcohol use, violence, and antisocial behavior decrease as parent engagement increases.
8. Students keep pace with academic performance if their parents participate in school events, develop a working relationship with educators, and keep up with what is happening with their child's school.
9. Junior and senior high school students whose parents remain involved make better transitions, maintain the quality of their work, and develop realistic plans for their future. Students whose parents are not involved, on the other hand, are more likely to drop out of school.

**TAKING ACTION TO INCREASE PARENT ENGAGEMENT**

Each member of the educational community plays a critical role in the academic and personal success of our students. We encourage you to continue your current efforts. However, we are challenging you to take your effort to the next level and get your students' parents engaged and increase academic results.

Below you will find some suggestions that we believe each audience can do to increase parent engagement. These simple but powerful action steps fully implemented will result in increased parent engagement, and positively impact student attendance, academic achievement and will result in students having higher expectations of themselves and their teachers. Here is what each of you can do:

Board Members                          Elementary Principals

Superintendents                        Secondary Principals

Elementary Parents                     Teachers

Secondary Parents                      Community and Businesses

Principals

The Michigan Department of Education Offices have developed the "Collaborating For Success" Parent Engagement Toolkit; a comprehensive, research-based resource that includes pertinent and practical information, proven strategies and tools to assist you in enhancing your parent engagement efforts and/or providing a simple yet powerful guide to jump start your program. We encourage you to take full advantage of this excellent resource. Download the entire "Collaborating For Success" Parent Engagement Toolkit.

**"COLLABORATING FOR SUCCESS" PARENT ENGAGEMENT TOOLKIT**

## SECTION I & SECTION II

Welcome

About the "Collaborating For Success" Parent Engagement Toolkit

Why Parent Engagement Is Important

Legal Requirements

**RESOURCES FOR PARENTS**

## SECTION III

Resources For Parents

Parents: The Basics

Parents: What Does It Mean To Be "Engaged or Involved"?

How The Education System Works

What Is My Child Learning?

How Do I Know My Child Is Learning?

What To Ask At A Parent-Teacher Conference

Transition to Kindergarten Parent Guides

Get Involved - It Matters!

Getting Connected At Home

Staying Alert! - Changing Behaviors

Early Learning

Older Children

Students With Disabilities

Michigan Merit Curriculum High School Graduation Requirements

Applying To College

**RESOURCES FOR SCHOOLS & DISTRICTS**

## SECTION IV

Resources For Schools And Districts

The Basics

What Does It Mean To Be "Engaged or Involved"?

Traditional And Non-Traditional Parent Participation

Developing Your Program - Part I And Part II

Strategies For Strong Parent And Family Engagement - Part I - Understanding Different Cultures

Strategies For Strong Parent And Family Engagement - Part II - Overcoming The Barriers

Strategies For Strong Parent And Family Engagement - Part III - Connecting With Parents

Parent Engagement In Middle And High School

Increasing Father Engagement

Working With Interpreters And Translators

Family Engagement

**RESEARCH & RESOURCES**

SECTION V

**"COLLABORATING FOR SUCCESS"
PARENT ENGAGEMENT TOOLKIT TRANSLATIONS**

### *Spanish*



RECURSOS PARA PADRES
SECCIÓN III

### *Arabic*



موارد لأولياء الأمور
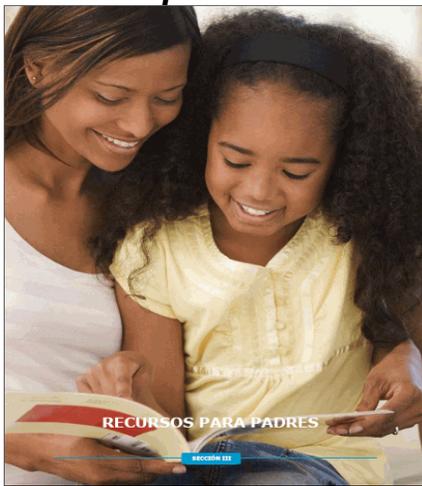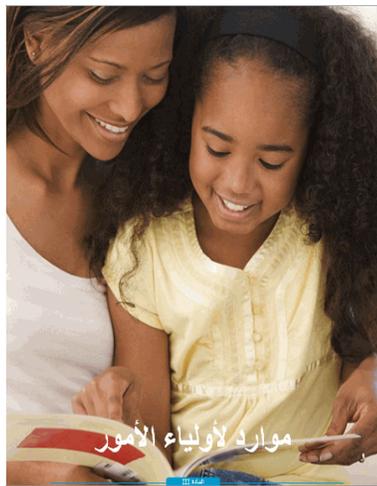
# An Example of a Program Model for Fostering Parent and Home Involvement in Schools

## *School Development Program*

One of the most frequently cited programs for enhancing parent involvement in schools was developed by James Comer and colleagues of the Yale Child Study Center. The model was designed with special attention to child development considerations, relationship and systems theory, and the promotion and enrichment of the relationships among all school stakeholders (e.g., parents, students, staff and administrators). In this respect, a fundamental premise is that, for a parent involvement initiative to succeed, the school's ecology must foster positive, supportive, and communicative relationships among all stakeholders. (Traditional bureaucratic environments -- that is those that do not have a collaborative organizational structure, are viewed as having structural, systemic barriers that interfere with significant parental involvement.)

As described online (http://medicine.yale.edu/childstudy/comer/about/works.aspx ):

Three structures comprise the basic framework on which the Comer Process is built:

•**The School Planning and Management Team** develops a Comprehensive School Plan, sets academic, social and community relations goals, and coordinates all school activities, including staff development programs. The team creates critical dialogue around teaching and learning and monitors progress to identify needed adjustments to the school plan as well as opportunities to support the plan. Members of the team include administrators, teachers, support staff, and parents.

*For more information about the School Planning and Management Team (SPMT) and the SPMT subcommittees,* please see the following chapters from Transforming School Leadership and Management to Support Student Learning and Development:The Field Guide to Comer Schools in Action:

The School Planning and Management Team (SPMT): The Engine That Drives the School by Miriam McLaughlin, Everol Ennis, and Fred Hernandez (Chapter 3, pp. 25-39) http://medicine.yale.edu/childstudy/comer/about/SPMT%20chapter_tcm147-75191_tcm147-284-32.pdf

The School Planning and Management Team (SPMT) Subcommittees: Where the Work of the Comprehensive School Plan Gets Done by Malcolm N. Adler and Jan Stocklinski with contributions by J. Patrick Howley, Sherrie Berrien Joseph, and the Comer Staff of the Prince George's County Public Schools, Maryland (Chapter 7, pp. 77-95) http://medicine.yale.edu/childstudy/comer/about/SPMT% 20subcommittees_tcm147-75192_tcm147-284-32.pdf

•**The Student and Staff Support Team** promotes desirable social conditions and relationships. It connects all of the school's student services, facilitates the sharing of information and advice, addresses individual student needs, accesses resources outside the school, and develops prevention programs. Serving on this team are the principal and staff members with expertise in child development and mental health, such as counselors, social workers, psychologists, special education teachers, nurses, and others.

*For more information about the Student and Staff Support Team (SSST)*, please see the following chapter from Transforming School Leadership and Management to Support Student Learning and Development:The Field Guide to Comer Schools in Action:

The Student and Staff Support Team and the Coordination of Student Services: "Nine Different People Were Helping One Child" by William T. Brown and Sherrie Berrien Joseph (Chapter 11, pp. 127-147) http://medicine.yale.edu/childstudy/comer/about/SSST%20chapter_tcm147-75194_tcm147-284-32.pdf

   •**The Parent Team** involves parents and families in the school by developing activities through which they can support the school's social and academic programs. This team also selects representatives to serve on the School Planning and Management Team.

*For more information about the Parent Team*, please see the following chapter from Transforming School Leadership and Management to Support Student Learning and Development:The Field Guide to Comer Schools in Action:

Families as Partners: Parent teams and Parent/Family Involvement by Sheila Jackson, Nora Martin, and Jan Stocklinski (Chapter 10, pp. 105-126) http://medicine.yale.edu/childstudy/comer/about/Families%20as%20partners%20chapter_tcm147-75193_tcm147-284-32.pdf

All three teams adhere to the following three guiding principles throughout their work:

- No-Fault Problem Solving—Maintains the focus on problem-solving rather than placing blame

- Consensus Decision Making—Through dialogue and understanding, builds consensus about what is good for children and adolescents

   Making Decisions: Reaching Consensus in Team Meetings by Michael Ben-Avie, Trudy Raschkind Steinfeld, and James P. Comer, M.D., M.P.H. (Chapter 17, pp. 185-190) http://medicine.yale.edu/childstudy/comer/about/Chapter%2017%20Consensus%20decision_tcm147-75929_tcm147-284-32.pdf

- Collaboration—Encourages the principal and teams to work together

This framework places the students' developmental needs at the center of the school's agenda and establishes shared responsibility. Concerned adults work together to provide students with the developmental activities that may be lacking outside the school. They also work together to make effective decisions about the program and curriculum of the school based on student needs. Central to their work are the following three school operations, which are supervised by the School Planning and Management Team:

- Development of the Comprehensive School Plan including curriculum, instruction and assessment, as well as social and academic climate goals based on a developmental understanding of students

   Designing the Comprehensive School Plan by Valerie Maholmes, Ph.D., (Chapter 6, pp. 57-62) http://medicine.yale.edu/childstudy/comer/about/Chapter%206%20Comprehensive%20School%20Plan_tcm147-75928_tcm147-284-32.pdf

- Provision of Staff Development in the service of achieving the goals of the Comprehensive School Plan

- Assessment and Modification that provides new information and identifies new opportunities based on the data of the school's population

## IV. Examples of Current Activity
### B. Major Organizational Resources

**Center on School, Family, and Community Partnerships**

Joyce L. Epstein, Director,
Johns Hopkins University
http://www.csos.jhu.edu/p2000/center.htm

The Center began its work in 1990 as the Center on Families, Communities, Schools and Children's Learning, supported by the U. S. Department of Education's Office of Educational Research and Improvement (OERI). The mission of this Center is to conduct and disseminate research, development, and policy analyses that produce new and useful knowledge and practices that help families, educators, and members of communities work together to improve schools, strengthen families, and enhance student learning and development.. The Center's projects aim to increase an understanding of practices of partnership that help all children succeed in elementary, middle, and high schools in rural, suburban, and urban areas.

Current projects include the development of and research on the Center's National Network of Partnership Schools (see below). This Network guides school, district, and state leaders, and teams of educators, parents, and others to improve school, family, and community partnerships. Studies will be conducted on the structures and processes used to "scale up" programs of partnership to all schools in a district or state, and the results of these programs.

Research is conducted in collaboration with the Center for Research on the Education of Students Placed at Risk (CRESPAR) at Johns Hopkins University. Studies focus on the effects of school, family, and community partnerships, and on the development of preservice, inservice, and advanced courses in partnerships for teachers and administrators.

The Center also organizes an International Network of Scholars including researchers from the U. S. and over 40 nations who are working on topics of school, family, and community partnerships. International roundtables, conferences, and opportunities for visiting scholars are supported by the Center.

**National Network of Partnership Schools**

http://www.csos.jhu.edu/p2000/index.htm

This project of the above Center was established by researchers at Johns Hopkins University. Partnership Schools brings together schools, districts, and states that are committed to developing and maintaining comprehensive programs of school-family-community partnerships.

Epstein's framework of **six types of involvement** and the **action team** approach are essential for a comprehensive program of partnership. Planning and evaluating partnership practices helps schools reach their goals for improvement and student success. District and state leadership can facilitate the work of Action Teams by conducting workshops and end-of-year celebrations, by assisting with budgets and funding, and in many other ways. Now, using **ten steps**, all schools can design and conduct school, home, and community connections in ways that improve schools, strengthen families, and increase student success.

Check out the **NNPS Partnership Planner**, a twelve-month guide for planning, implementing, evaluating, and facilitating partnership programs.

### *National Coalition for Parent Involvement in Education* (NCPIE)
http://www.ncpie.org/

The NCPIE mission is "to advocate the involvement of parents and families in their children's education, and to foster relationships between home, school, and community to enhance the education of all our nation's young people. The coalition seeks to:

- **Serve as a visible representative** for strong parent and family involvement initiatives at the national level.
- **Conduct activities** that involve the coalition's member organizations and their affiliates and constituencies in efforts to increase family involvement.
- **Provide resources and legislative information** that can help member organizations promote parent and family involvement.

NCPIE was founded in 1980, at the initiative of what was then the National School Volunteer Program (now National Association for Partners in Education), with funding from the Ford Foundation and Union Carbide. From the outset, the participating organizations included parent organizations and advocacy groups as well as national education organizations representing teachers and administrators. The group has been meeting monthly ever since to monitor legislation, initiate projects, and share information and ideas about research, programs, and policies. In addition, NCPIE has sponsored luncheon seminars, national conferences, and an annual review." For the latest information, see the *NCPIE Update* at http://www.ncpie.org/WhatsHappening/NCPIEUpdate.html  For a complete catalog of resources, go to http://www.ncpie.org/Resources/

## Center for Family Involvement in Schools http://www.rci.rutgers.edu/~cfis/

This center "provides equity-focused professional development programs and resources" to "strengthen family-school-community partnerships and encourage and support the academic, intellectual and social development of all children." Formerly a unit of the Rutgers Consortium for Educational Equity, it is now a unit of the Rutgers Center for Mathematics, Science, and Computer Education (CMSCE). The Center's goals are

- To increase the collaboration and the dialogue among parents, teachers and schools.
- To train educators to be facilitators and leaders in parental involvement, equity and family-school-community partnerships.
- To encourage all children, especially young women and racial/ethnic minority students, to see themselves as capable, and contributors to the future of our planet.
- To provide time and space in an afterschool program for children and parents to have enjoyable and creative hands-on learning experiences.
- To raise awareness of the importance of preparing for future studies and careers.
- To develop communication skills and strategies that encourage problem-solving and reduce frustrations.
- To create programs that reflect, integrate and respect the diverse cultures of our children and their families.
- To support and reinforce national and state curriculum content standards.

The Center conducts workshops, and currently offers professional development programs.

# A Sample of Other Organizations Concerned with Home Involvement

Association for Middle Level Education – http://amle.org/

ASPIRA Parents for Excellence (APEX) – http://www.aspira.org/book/aspira-parents-excellence-apex

Attendance Works – http://www.attendanceworks.org/tools/for-parents/

Casey Family Programs – http://www.casey.org/resources/

Child Welfare League of America – http://www.cwla.org/

Childrens Aid Society – http://www.childrensaidsociety.org/family-support

Community Matters – http://community-matters.org/

Military Child Education Coalition  – http://www.militarychild.org/

Mocha Moms  – http://www.mochamoms.org/

National Association of Elementary School Principals –    http://www.naesp.org/

National Association of Secondary School Principals – http://www.nassp.org/

National Black Child Development Institute (NBCDI) –    http://nbcdi.org/

National Center for School Engagement (NCSE) – http://schoolengagement.org/

National Council of La Raza –  http://www.nclr.org/

National Dropout Prevention Center/Network –  http://dropoutprevention.org/

National Fatherhood Initiative – http://www.fatherhood.org/

National Foster Parent Association –  http://www.nfpaonline.org/

National PIRC Coordination Center – http://www.nationalpirc.org/

National PTA – http://www.nationalpirc.org/

Office of Head Start, Administration for Children, Youth and Families – http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/ohs

Parent-Child Home Program  – http://www.parent-child.org/

Parents As Teachers –  http://www.parentsasteachers.org/

Parents for Public Schools –  http://parents4publicschools.org/

Pritchard Committee for Academic Excellence's Center for Parent Leadership – http://www.prichardcommittee.org/

Rural School & Community Trust – http://www.ruraledu.org/

United Way of America –  http://www.unitedway.org/

US Department of Education Parental Information and Resource Centers (PIRC) – http://www.nationalpirc.org/pircs/index.html

Zero to Three –  http://zerotothree.org/

# IV. Examples of Current Activity

## *C. Family Needs Assessment (English and Spanish versions)*

This is an example of a questionnaire designed to be mailed to parents to clarify awareness of

- opportunities for involvement at school

- involvement interests and attitudes

- current involvements

- barriers to involvement

In instances when questionnaires are not returned, a follow-up phone interview may be productive.

# Family Needs Assessment – mail form questionnaire

This questionnaire is part of a project your child's school and _____are working on together. It is intended to find out what you think about the programs your child's school is offering to parents and about which ones you like. We need to know what parents think in order to improve programs.

It takes about 15 minutes to fill out. What you tell us is confidential. That is, we only tell the school about what parents are saying; we never tell them who said it.

We really appreciate your help in this project. If you have any questions please call _____.

Student's name: _____     School: _____

Your name: _____

Your relationship to the student: _____

1.  Besides the student named above, do you have other children who go to school? _____
(If yes, how many?) _____
What are their ages? _____
Do you have any other children? _____
(If yes, how many?) _____
What are their ages? _____

2.  Please put a checkmark next to the activities that your child's school offers for parent participation.

Does the school offer parents a chance ...

___ to be in the PTA (or a similarly large, voluntary organization of parents and teachers)
___ to volunteer in the classroom
___ to volunteer for special events
___ to attend student performances
___ to attend parent workshops
___ to attend parent support groups
___ to attend amnesty classes
___ to attend English Second Language classes
___ to have parent-teacher conferences
___ to talk with teachers at other times about a child
___ to talk with the principal
___ to visit a child's classroom.
___ to be on the a school advisory board
___ to be on a bilingual advisory board
___ to be on a Shared Decision Making Council
___ other (specify): _____

3.  Please put a checkmark beside all activities participated in?

Mother   Father
  has        has
_____   _____   been in the PTA
_____   _____   volunteered in the classroom
_____   _____   volunteered for special events
_____   _____   attended student performances
_____   _____   attended parent workshops
_____   _____   attended parent-teacher conferences
_____   _____   attended open house
_____   _____   attended parent support groups
_____   _____   attended amnesty classes
_____   _____   attend English Second Language classes
_____   _____   talked with teachers at school at other times
_____   _____   talked with the teacher on the phone
_____   _____   talked with principal
_____   _____   visited a child's classroom
_____   _____   been on a school advisory board
_____   _____   been on a bilingual advisory board
_____   _____   been on a Shared Decision Making Council
_____   _____   other (specify): _____

4.  Some parents who want to come to school activities find it hard to do so. Is it difficult for you to come to school events?
  (Please circle answer)     YES     NO

5. Please put a checkmark beside any of the following which have made it difficult to be involved at school?

Mother   Father
_____   _____   work schedule
_____   _____   no transportation
_____   _____   no baby sitter
_____   _____   has trouble with English. If so, What
                        language do you feel most
                        comfortable speaking? _____
_____   _____   feels out of place at the school
_____   _____   events are scheduled at a bad time of day
_____   _____   just too busy, don't really have time
_____   _____   other (specify):

6. Has the school sent you enough information about parent programs and activities?
   (Please circle answers)                          YES     NO

7. Some parents feel that the teacher should handle all of a student's schooling and not ask parents to get involved. Others feel that while a teacher should handle all of the child's schooling, it is good for parents to get involved.

   Do you think it is right for teachers to ask for parent involvement in their child's schooling?   YES   NO

8. When your children need help with schoolwork, do you know good ways to help them?                    YES     NO

9. Parents differ in how involved they can be with their children's schooling. Do you think you have been less involved than other parents seem to be OR more involved than other parents?

      LESS INVOLVED          MORE INVOLVED

10. Do you think teachers don't really want parents to help in their child's schooling OR that they really do want parents to help?

      DON'T WANT HELP      DO WANT HELP

11a. Do you think schools should ask parents to do more to make it easier for their children to get to school on time (e.g., wake children up, make sure they leave home in time, walk or drive them to school)?                          YES     NO

b. Do you think schools should ask parents to do more to make home a better place to study?  (e.g., provide a quiet place to study, provide paper and pencils, etc.)?
                                                    YES     NO

c. How often do you find you have to do more to make it easier for your children to got to school on time and to study at home?

Never        Every           Once a      At least Once
 few months   Month           a week

d. How important is it for you to do more to make it easier for your children to get to school on time and to study at home?

____ Not at all important
____ Not too important
____ Important
____ Very important

e. Have the schools suggested ways that you can do more at home to make it easier for your children to get to school on time and to study at home?
                      YES      NO

12a. Do you think schools should ask parents to come to school to talk to teachers about how their children are doing?
                      YES      NO

b. How important is it for you to come to school to talk to teachers about how your children are doing?

_____ Not at all important
_____ Not too important
_____ Important
_____ Very important

c. How important is it to talk to teachers when your children are having trouble at school?

_____ Not at all important
_____ Not too important
_____ Important
_____ Very important

d. How important is it to talk to teachers when your children are doing O.K. at school?

_____ Not at all important
_____ Not too important
_____ Important
_____ Very important

e. How often do you talk with teachers?

Never        Every           Once a      At least
 few months   Month           Once a week

f. Have you ever asked for a meeting with one of your children's teachers?                YES        NO

g. Have the schools suggested ways to make it easier for you to talk with teachers?
                                          YES  NO

13a. Do you think schools should ask parents to come to school for student programs?        YES  NO

b. How often do you attend student programs?

| Never | Every few months | Once a Month | At least Once a week |
|---|---|---|---|

c. How important to you is it to come to student programs?
_____ Not at all important
_____ Not too important
_____ Important
_____ Very important

d. Have the schools suggested ways to make it easier for you to come to student programs?        YES NO

14a. Do you think schools should ask parents to participate in activities with other parents at school?
                                          YES   NO

b. How often do you participate in activities with other parents at school?

| Never | Every few months | Once a Month | At least Once a week |
|---|---|---|---|

c. How important-to you is it to participate in activities with other parents at school?

_____ Not at all important
_____ Not too important
_____ Important
_____ Very important

d. Have the schools suggested ways to make it easier for you to participate in activities with other parents at school?                                          YES NO

15a. Do you think schools should ask parents to help out at school (e.g., to assist teachers and help with fund raising)
                                          YES    NO

b. How often do you help out at school?

| Never | Every few months | Once a Month | At least Once a week |
|---|---|---|---|

c. How important to you is it to help out at school?

_____ Not at all important
_____ Not too important
_____ Important
_____ Very important

d. Have the schools suggested ways to make it easier for you to help out at school?        YES    NO

16a. Do you think schools should ask parents to help their children do their schoolwork?        YES    NO

b. Please check whether you or another person helps your child with schoolwork.

____ I help with schoolwork
____ Another person helps with schoolwork
____ No one helps with schoolwork

c. How often is help with schoolwork provided?

| Never | Every few months | Once a Month | At least once a week |
|---|---|---|---|

d. If help with school is provided, how much time is spent in doing so?

| Less than 5 min. | 15 min | 30 min. | 45 min. | More than 1 hour |
|---|---|---|---|---|

e. If such help is provided, with what types of schoolwork is help given?

  Reading  Writing            Spelling

  Drawing  Math                    Other: _____

f. If such help is provided, which of the following is done?

____ watching to be certain the work is done.
____ sitting with a child to help when needed
____ showing a child how to do the work
____ encouraging a child to try harder
____ checking the work to be sure it is done right
____ doing some of the work when a child finds it too hard
____ Other (specify): _____

g. How important to you is it to provide help when your children do their schoolwork?

_____ Not at all important
_____ Not too important
_____ Important
_____ Very important

h. Have the schools suggested ways to make it easier for you to help your children do their schoolwork?
                                                                          YES    NO

i. When you work with your children does it usually turn out to be a good or a bad experience for you?
                                                                          Good    Bad

And how is it for your children?          Good    Bad

17a. How would you rate your past experiences with your children's schooling?

____ Very negative
____ Negative
____ Positive
____ Very positive

b. How would you rate your own past experience with your own schooling?

____ Very negative
____ Negative
____ Positive
____ Very positive

18. How welcome do you feel at your children's school?

____ Very welcome
____ Welcome
____ Not very Welcome
____ Very unwelcome

19. In some families, several people are involved in a child's schooling. Which of the following, if any, are involved with your children's schooling?
____ Mother
____ Father
____ Sister
____ Brother
____ Grandmother
____ Grandfather
____ Aunt
____ Uncle
____ Cousin
____ Friend
____ Baby sitter

# Cuestionario de correo

Este cuestionario es parte de un proyecto que la escuela de su nino(a) y estan desarrollando juntos. Proponemos averiguar que piensa usted de los programas que se estan ofreciendo para los padres en la escuela de su hijo y cuales le gusta. Necesitamos saber lo que piensan los padres para, mejorar los programas.

El cuestionario toma mas o menos quince minutos para Ilenar. Lo que usted contesta as confidencial. Solamente informamos a las escuelas lo que opinan los padres; Nosotros nunca les decimos quien lo dijo.

Nosotros realmente apreciamos su ayuda con este proyecto.
Si usted tiene cualquier preguntas, por favor llame a an el numero_____.

---

Nombre de al estudiante:_____Escuela:_____

Su nombre _____

Su relacion al estudiante: _____

1. ¿Ademas de el estudiante nombrado arriba, tiene usted otros niños en escuela?_____
(Si tiene otros nihos, cuantos son?) _____
¿Cuales son sus edades?_____
¿Tiene usted otros nihos?_____
(Si tiene otros ninos, Cuantos son?)_____
¿Cuales son sus edades?_____

2. Por favor indique con una marca al lado de las actividades que la escuela de su hijo ofrece..

¿Quiero saber si la escuela les ofrecen a los padres la oportunidad de ....?

____participar en la Asociacion de Padres y Maestros
____ser voluntario on la clase
____ser voluntario para ocasiones especiales
____asistir programas de los estudiantes
____asistir talleres do capacitacion de padres
____asistir grupo de apoyo de padres
____asistir clases de amnistia.
____asistir clases de ingles como segunda idioma
____asistir conferencias de padres y maestros
____hablar con maestros de vez an cuando acerca de su hijo.
____hablar con al director de la escuela
____visitar la clase do su hijo
____participar en la junta consejera escolar
____participar an la junta consejera bilingue
____participar an el concilio de toma de decisiones compartidas
____otras (sea especifico):_____

3. Por favor indique con una marca al lado de todas las actividades escolares que ustedes han participado?

| Madre ha | Padre ha | |
|---|---|---|
| ____ | ____ | participado en la Asociacion de Padres y Maestros |
| ____ | ____ | sido voluntario en la clase |
| ____ | ____ | sido voluntario para ocasiones especiales |
| ____ | ____ | asistido programas de los estudiantes |
| ____ | ____ | asistido talleres de capacitacion de padres |
| ____ | ____ | asistido grupo de apoyo de padres |
| ____ | ____ | asistido clases de amnistia |
| ____ | ____ | asistido clases de ingles como segunda idioma |
| ____ | ____ | asistido conferencias de padres y maestros |
| ____ | ____ | hablado con maestros de vez an cuando acerca de su hijo |
| ____ | ____ | hablado con el director de la escuela |
| ____ | ____ | visitado la clase de su hijo |
| ____ | ____ | participado en la junta consejera escolar |
| ____ | ____ | participado an la junta consejera bilinque |
| ____ | ____ | participado en el concilio de toma de decisiones compartidas |
| ____ | ____ | otras (sea especifico):_____ |

(Por favor indique su respuesta con un circulo.)

4. Algunos padres que quieren participar en las actividades escolares se les hace dificil. ¿Es dificil para usted venir a los programas escolares?
Si        No

5. Por favor indique con una marca al lado de cualquiera de las siguientes problemas comunes que se le han hecho dificil para participar en la escuela.

Madre  Padre
____   ____ horario del trabajo
____   ____ no tener transportacion
____   ____ no tener quien le cuide los ninos
____   ____ problemas con el ingles
____   ____ sentirse incomodo(a) en la escuela
____   ____ los programas estan an mala hora del
          dia
____   ____ estoy muy ocupado; no tengo tiempo
          para participar
____   ____ otra razon (sea especifico)_____

(Por favor indique su respuesta con un circulo.)

6. ¿Le ha mandado la escuela a usted bastante informacion acerca de actividades y programas para los padres?
       Si  No

7. Algunos padres piensan qua el maestro debe de dirigir toda la educacio'n de sus hijos y que no deberia de pedir que participen los padres. Otros piensan que mientras que el maestro deberia de dirigir la educacion de su hijo, es bueno que los padres participen.

¿Piensa usted que los maestros deberian de pedirles a los padres que participen en la educacion de sus hijos?
      Si   No

8. ¿Cuando sus hijos necesitan ayuda con su tareas, sabe usted maneras buenas para ayudarles?
      Si  No

9. Padres no estan de acuerdo en que tanto pueden participar en la educacion de su hijos. ¿Piensa usted que ha participado menos que otros padres 0 mas que los otros padres?
     Menos   Mas

10. ¿Piensa usted que los maestros en realidad no quieren que los padres ayuden en la educacion de sus hijos 0 que an realidad quiren que los padres ayuden?

  No Quieren Ayuda   Sl Quieren Ayuda

11a. ¿Piensa usted que las escuelas deberian de pedirles a los padres que hagan mas para serle mas facil a los ninos a llegar a tiempo a la escuela? Por ejemplo, levantar el nino, asegurar que salgan de casa a tiempo, caminarlos o manejarlos a la escuela.
    Si    No

11b. ¿Piensa usted que las escuelas deberian de pedirles a los padres que hagan mas para hacer el hogar un mejor lugar para estudiar? Por ejemplo, proveer un lugar quieto para estudiar, proveer papel y lapices. Si  No

11c. ¿Cuantas veces encuentra usted que necesita hacer mas para facilitar que sus ninos lleguen a la escuela a tiempo y que estudien en casa?

NUNCA  CADA CUANTOS UNA VEZ AL
      MESES   MES

A LO MENOS  UNA VEZ POR SEMANA

11d. ¿Que tan importante es para usted hacer mas para facilitar que sus hijos lleguen a la escuela a tiempo y que estudien en casa?

NO ES NADA NO ES MUY ES IMPORTANTE MUY
     IMPORTANTE
     IMPORTANTE

11e. ¿Han sugerido las escuelas maneras para que usted pueda hacer mas en casa para serle mas facil a sus hijos llegar a la escuela a tiempo y que estudien en la casa?
      Si   No

12a. ¿Piensa usted que las escuelas deberian pedirles a los padres que vengan a la escuela para hablar con los maestros sobre el progreso de sus hijos?

     Si   No

12b. ¿Que tan importante es para usted venir a la escuela para hablar con los maestros sobre el progreso de su hijo?

NO ES NADA NO ES MUY ES IMPORTANTE MUY
     IMPORTANTE
IMPORTANTE

12c. ¿Que tan importante es hablar con los maestros cuando sus hijos estan teniendo problemas en la escuela?

NO ES NADA NO ES MUY ES IMPORTANTE MUY
     IMPORTANTE
IMPORTANTE

12d. ¿Que tan importante es hablar con los maestros cuando sus hijos estan progresando satisfactorio?

NO ES NADA NO ES MUY ES IMPORTANTE MUY
     IMPORTANTE
IMPORTANTE

12e. ¿Que tan frequentemente habla usted con los maestros?

A LO MENOS        UNA VEZ POR  SEMANA

12f.  ¿Ha pedido usted una junta con uno de los maestros de
sus hijo?          Si        No

12g.  ¿Han sugerido las escuelas maneras mas faciles para
que usted hable con los maestros?     Si        No

13a.  ¿Piensa usted que las escuelas deberian pedirles a los
padres que vengan a la escuela para los programas de los
estudiantes?                      Si        No

13b.  ¿Que tan frequentemente asiste usted los programas
de los estudiantes?
NUNCA       CADA CUANTOS      UNA VEZ AL
                MESES                MES

A LO MENOS        UNA VEZ POR  SEMANA

13c.  ¿Que tan importante es para usted venir a los
programas de los estudiantes?

NO ES NADA   NO ES MUY     ES IMPORTANTE   MUY
                IMPORTANTE                      IMPORTANTE

13d.  ¿Han sugerido las escuelas maneras mas faciles para
que usted venga a los programas de los estudiantes?
                        Si        No

14a.  ¿Piensa usted que las escuelas deberian pedirles a los
padres que participen en actividades con otros padres en la
escuela?            Si        No

14b.  ¿Que tan frequentemente participa usted an
actividades con otros padres en la escuela?

NUNCA      CADA CUANTOS        UNA VEZ AL MES
                MESES

A LO MENOS UNA VEZ POR SEMANA

14c.  ¿Que tan importante as para usted participar an
actividades con otros padres?

NO ES NADA   NO ES MUY     ES IMPORTANTE   MUY
                IMPORTANTE                      IMPORTANTE

14d.  ¿Han sugerido las escuelas maneras mas faciles para
que usted participe an actividades con otros padres an la
escuela?                Si  No

15a.  ¿Piensa usted que las escuelas deberian pedirles a los
padres que ayuden an las escuelas?  Por ejemplo, ayudarles
a los maestros.       Si        No

15b.  ¿Que tan frequentemente ayuda usted an la escuela?

15c.  ¿Que tan importante es para usted ayudar en la
escuela?

NO ES NADA   NO ES MUY    ES IMPORTANTE   MUY
                IMPORTANTE                      IMPORTANTE

15d.  ¿Han sugerido las escuelas maneras mas faciles
para que usted ayude en la escuela?        Si        No

16a.  ¿Piensa usted que las escualas deberian pedirles a
los padres que ayuden a sus hijos hacer sus tareas?
                        Si        No

16b.  ¿Quien ayuda a sus hijos con sus tareas? (Por favor
indigue con una marca si usted o otra persona lo ayuda
con su tarea)
_____  Yo los ayudo con la tarea.
_____  Otra persona los ayuda con la tarea.
_____  Nade los ayuda con la tarea.

16c.  ¿Que tan frequentemente ofrecen ayuda con las
tareas?

NUNCA       CADA CUANTOS      UNA VEZ AL
                MESES                MES

A LO MENOS        UNA VEZ POR  SEMANA

16d.  ¿Si ayudan, cuanto tiempo se toma usted cuando le
ayuda a su hijo con su tarea?

Menos que    15 minutos    30 minutos          45 minutos

Una hora

l6e.  ¿Si ayudan,  con cuales temas le ayuda usted a su
hijo?
Lectura         Escritura        Ortografia         Dibujo

Matematica        Otro:_____

16f.  ¿Si ayudan, qua de las siguientes cosas hacen
ustedes?

(Por favor indique *con* una marca al lado de su respuesta)

_____  Lo mira para estar seguro que termina la tarea.
_____  Se sienta ud. con su hijo para darle ayuda cuando
              lo necesita
_____  Lo ensena como hacer el trabajo
_____  Lo apoya para que haga mas esfuerzo
_____  Verifica su tarea para estar seguro que la hizo
              bien
_____  Hace un poco de la tarea que as dificil para su

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hijo
\_\_\_\_\_ Otra (sea especifico):_____

16g. ¿Que tan importante es para usted poder ayudar cuando sus hijos hacen su tarea?

NO ES NADA   NO ES MUY    ES IMPORTANTE   MUY
                IMPORTANTE                           IMPORTANTE

16h. ¿Han sugerido las escuelas maneras mas faciles para que usted le ayude a su hijo con su tarea?
                                        Si              No

16i. ¿Cuando usted trabaja con su hijo, normalmente se le hace buena 0 mala la experencia para usted?
                            BUENA          MALA

¿Y como es la experencia para su hijo?
                            BUENA          MALA

17a. ¿Como describiria usted su experencia con la educacion de sus hijos?

FUE MUY NEGATIVA     NEGATIVA

 POSITIVA              MUY POSITIVA

17b. ¿Como describiria usted su propia experencia con su educacion?

FUE MUY NEGATIVA     NEGATIVA
POSITIVA          MUY POSITIVA

18. ¿Que tan agusto(a) se siente usted en la escuela de su hijo?

MUY          AGUSTO    NO MUY
NADA
AGUSTO                      AGUSTO
AGUSTO

19. ¿En a1gunas familias,  hay varias personas que participan en la educacion de su nino.  Cuales de las siguientes personas
participan en la educacion de su nino?

\_\_\_\_\_ Madre
\_\_\_\_\_ Padre
\_\_\_\_\_ Hermana
\_\_\_\_\_ Hermano
\_\_\_\_\_ Abuela
\_\_\_\_\_ Abuelo
\_\_\_\_\_ Tia
\_\_\_\_\_ Tio
\_\_\_\_\_ Primo (a)

## IV. Examples of Current Activity

## D. Resources for Promoting Family-School Partnerships

There are a variety of resources that offer guidance and tools for developing organizations for family-school collaboration. On this and the following pages are examples:

*School-Community Partnerships: A Guide* – developed by the Center for Mental Health at UCLA – online at http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/pdfdocs/guides/schoolcomm.pdf

Contents
> I. Why School-Community Partnerships?
>> Definitions, Dimensions and Characteristics, Principles, State of the Art, Recommendations to Enhance School-Community Partnerships
> II. Building and Maintaining Effective Collaboratives
>> Building from Localities Outward, Mechanisms, A Multi-Locality Collaborative, Barriers to Collaboration
> III. Getting from Here to There
>> What Are Some of the First Steps?, Mechanisms for Systemic Change, A Bit More about the Functions of a Change Agent and Change Team, A Note of Caution
> Concluding Comments
> References
> Appendices
>> A: A Comprehensive, Multifaceted Continuum of Intervention: Understanding the Big Picture
>> B: Reported Examples of Successful School-Community Initiatives
>> C: Melaville and Blank' s Sample of School-Community Partnerships
> Resource Aids
>> I. Tools for Mapping Resources
>> II. Examples of Funding Sources
>> III. Working with Others to Enhance Programs and Services
>> IV. Tools for Gap Analysis and Action Planning
>> V. Using Data for Planning, Implementation, and Evaluation
>> VI. Legal Issues
>> VII. Agencies and Online Resources Relevant to School-Community

*Fostering School, Family, and Community Involvement*. One in the series on "Safe and Secure: Guides to Creating Safer Schools" developed by H. Adelman & L. Taylor for the Hamilton Fish Institute and the Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory. Online at http://www.safetyzone.org/safe_secure.html

Provides an overview of the nature and scope of collaboration, explores barriers to effectively working together, and discusses the processes of establishing and sustaining the work. It also reviews the state of the art of collaboration around the country, the importance of data, and some issues related to sharing information.

***Building Community Partnerships for Learning*** – Based on *Strong Families, Strong Schools*, written by Jennifer Ballen and Oliver Moles, for the national family initiative of the U.S. Department of Education http://eric.ed.gov        ED371909

**Chapter 1:** FAMILY INVOLVEMENT: The benefits are numerous and lasting.

> *Families can help their children at home:*
> - Read together
> - Use TV wisely
> - Establish a daily family routine
> - Schedule daily homework times
> - Monitor out-of-school activities
> - Talk with children and teenagers
> - Communicate positive behaviors, values and character traits
> - Expect achievement and offer praise
>
> *Families can help their children at school:*
> - Require challenging coursework for middle and secondary school students
> - Keep in touch with the school
> - Ask more from schools
> - Use community resources
> - Encourage your employer to get involved

**Chapter 2:** SCHOOL-FAMILY PARTNERSHIPS: Schools must welcome parents and recognize their strengths.

> *Schools and families can work together to make schools safe.*
> - Establish family-school-community partnerships
> - Make learning relevant to children
> - Emphasize early childhood education
>
> *Families and schools can also team up to overcome barriers between them:*
> - Recognize parents' disconnection with public education
> - Train teachers to work with parents
> - Reduce cultural barriers and language barriers
> - Evaluate parents' needs
> - Accomodate families' work schedule
> - Use technology to link parents to classrooms
> - Make school visits easier
> - Establish a home-school coordinator
> - Promote family learning
> - Give parents a voice in school decisions

**Chapter 3:** COMMUNITIES: Communities connect families and schools.

*Community groups can increase family involvement in children's learning.*
- Combat alcohol, drugs, and violence.
- Reinforce successful child-raising skills
- Provide mentoring programs
- Enlist community volunteers
- Utilize senior citizen volunteers
- Offer summer learning programs
- Link social services
- Encourage parental leadership

**Chapter 4:** "FAMILY-FRIENDLY" BUSINESSES

**Chapter 5:** STATES CONNECTING FAMILIES AND SCHOOLS:

*Many states have developed family partnership programs.*
- California
- Wisconsin
- Connections between families and schools.

**Chapter 6:** MAKING FEDERAL POLICIES AND PROGRAMS SUPPORTIVE

*All agencies of the federal government can provide leadership to strengthen parental*
*involvement through their policies and programs.*
- Goals 2000: Educate America Act
- Family Involvement Partnership
- Title I of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act
- School-to-Work Opportunities Act
- Other family involvement programs funded by the U.S. Department of Education

*Other federal departments support the family involvement initiative.*
- U.S. Department of Agriculture
- U.S. Department of Justice
- U.S. Department of Health and Human Services
- U.S. Department of Defense
- U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development

**Chapter 7:** CONCLUSION

The National Association for School Psychologists (NASP) offers a range of information and resources for families. Go to http://www.nasponline.org/families/index.aspx to link with the following:

Resilience
  •NASP-Fishful Thinking Partnership
  •Building Resiliency: Helping Children Learn to Weather Tough Times
  •School-Wide Methods for Fostering Resiliency (pdf)

Back to School
  •Back-to-School Transitions: Tips for Parents (pdf)| Audio version
  •Homework: A Guide for Parents
  •NASP Podcast - Homework: Tips for Parents
  •Motivating Learning in Young Children
  •Home-School Conferences - A Guide for Parents | Audio version | Spanish |
  •Anxiety and Anxiety Disorders in Children: Information for Parents (pdf)
  •Anxiety and Anxiety Disorders in Children: Information for Parents (Spanish)
  •Grade Retention and Promotion: Information for Parents (pdf)
  •School Refusal: Information for Educators (pdf)
  •School Readiness—Preparing Children for Kindergarten and Beyond: Information for Parents (pdf)| Audio version
  •Who Are School Psychologists?

Behavior
  •Zero Tolerance and Alternative Discipline Strategies (pdf)
  •Bullies and Victims (pdf)
  •Defusing Violent Behavior in Young Children (pdf)
  •Name-Calling and Teasing (pdf)
  •Sexual Harassment (NASP handout) (pdf)
  •Teaching Young Children Self-Control Skills (pdf)
  •Temper Tantrums: Guidelines for Parents
  •Zero Tolerance and Alternative Strategies: A Fact Sheet for Educators and Policymakers (pdf)

Crisis and Safety
  •School Safety and Violence Prevention Resources
  •Preventing Youth Suicide: Tips for Parents and Educators
  •Talking to Children About Violence: Tips for Parents and Teachers (pdf)
  •Helping Children After a Wildfire: Tips for Parents and Teachers (pdf)
  •Gambling in Childhood and Adolescence: A Guide for Parents

Diversity
  •Safe and Affirmative Schools for Sexual Minority Youth (pdf)
  •U.S. Department of Education Resources for Spanish Speakers

Health and Wellness
  •Collaborating With Medical Professionals: A Guide for Educators (pdf)
  •ADHD and Medications: A Guide for Parents (pdf)
  •Swine Flu (H1N1) Resources
  •Mood Disorders: What Parents and Teachers Should Know
  •Obesity Prevention in Children: Strategies for Parents and School Personnel
  •Otitis Media (Ear Infections): Information for Parents and Teachers
  •Pregnancy in Adolescence: Information for Parents and Educators (pdf)
  •Sleep and Sleep Disorders in Children and Adolescents: Information for Parents and Educators
  •Steroids in Adolescence: The Cost of Achieving a Physical Ideal
  •Stress in Children and Adolescents: Tips for Parents (pdf)

Helping Children Cope
- •Stress in Children and Adolescents: Tips for Parents (pdf)
- •Helping Children Cope in Unsettling Times: Tips for Parents and Educators (pdf)

Home and School
- •What Parents and Students with Disabilities Should Know About College (pdf)
- •The IEP Team Process A Framework for Success:
  English Version | Vietnamese Version (video)
- •Section 504: A Guide for Parents and Educators (pdf)
- •Family School Conferences: A Guide for Parents and Teachers (pdf)
- •Back-to-School Transitions: Tips for Parents (pdf)
- •Homework: A Guide for Parents
- •Motivating Learning in Young Children
- •Home-School Conferences - A Guide for Parents
- •IEP Team Meetings - A Guide to Participation for Parents (pdf)

Instruction and Curriculum
- •Positive Behavioral Supports (PBS): Tips for Parents and Educators
- •Response to Intervention: A Primer (pdf)

Mental Health
- •Supporting Children's Mental Health: Tips for Parents and Educators
- •Depression in Children and Adolescents: Information for Parents and Educators (pdf)

Parenting
- •Divorce: A Parents' Guide for Supporting Children
- •Expanding Practice: Helping Families Develop a Family Internet Plan
- •Keeping Children Safe on the Internet: Guidelines for Parents
- •Parents Called to Active Duty: Helping Children Cope (pdf)
- •Military Deployment and Family Reintegration (pdf)

Useful Links
- •NASP Resources in Other Languages
- •Child Mind Institute – Recursos en Español
- •Colorin Colorado
- •Including Samuel Project
- •National Center for Learning Disabilities – Recursos en Español
- •U.S. Department of Education - Education Resources for Spanish Speakers (Recursos en español)

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*Toolkit of Resources for Engaging Parents and Community as Partners in Education*
– "Resources for the Family and Community Engagement Framework"
http://www2.ed.gov/print/parents/academic/help/resources.html

REL Pacific offers a variety of technical assistance resources and tools. While the toolkits below were designed specifically for building family and community engagement capacity in Guam, they are easily adaptable to other populations and locations. An updated and more generalized version will be released in the coming months.

**Part I: Building an Understanding of Family and Community Engagement**

The toolkit is designed to guide school staff in strengthening partnerships with families and community members to support student learning and offers an integrated approach to family and community engagement, bringing together research, promising practices, and a wide range of useful tools and resources with explanations and directions for using them.
http://relpacific.mcrel.org/resources/~/media/RELPacific/Files/ToolkitPart1.ashx

**Part 2: Building a Cultural Bridge**

The toolkit focuses on tapping into the strengths of families and community members and helping families to establish active roles within the school community in support of student learning.
http://relpacific.mcrel.org/resources/~/media/RELPacific/Files/Part%202_Jan2015.ashx

**Part 3: Building Trusting Relationships With Families and Community Through Effective Communication**

The toolkit focuses on cross-cultural and two-way communication as ways to enhance family and community engagement.
http://relpacific.mcrel.org/resources/~/media/RELPacific/Files/Part%203_Jan2015.ashx

**Part 4: Engaging All in Data Conversations**

The toolkit helps school staff understand what data are important to share with families and community members and how to share such data.
http://relpacific.mcrel.org/resources/~/media/RELPacific/Files/Part4_Mar2015.ashx

In offering their perspective and a list of resources, *Education World* states:

"Parent involvement in schools is much more than parent conferences and PTOs ... learn about practical ways in which schools are involving parents. Read about parent involvement strategies that are working for others -- and that could work for you!"
http://www.educationworld.com/a_special/parent_involvement.shtml

## IV. Examples of Current Activity

## E. Activities for State and Local Educational Agencies

The strategic planning process focuses on many strategies that can be used to build partnerships between families and schools. The most compelling strategies for transforming the mission and goals into action plans for implementation are those designed to:

**Build public awareness and support for family involvement in education.**
Endorsements for family involvement must come from school districts, schools, businesses, and community organizations; for example, churches and social groups.

**Establish comprehensive districtwide parent involvement policies and plans.**
School districts must develop polices for parent involvement and plans for implementation that will underscore the importance of faniily-school partnerships.

**Implement high quality, comprehensive, and sequential school and communitybased programs that promote meaningful parent involvement across all grades.** Schools must design parent involvement programs that support the research-based types of parent involvement identified in the State Board's policy on parent involvement and described previously.

**Strengthen the capacity of teachers and administrators to work with families of diverse backgrounds.** Preservice and inservice training programs must focus on attitudes, knowledge, and skills that enable educators to improve relationships with parents and involve parents in children's learning.

**Strengthen the capacity of families and other community members to become involved in the education of children at all levels of the educational system.**
Schools must develop family involvement programs that train and support parents in multiple roles throughout a child's education.

**Provide teachers with incentives to develop innovative ideas that help to link parent involvement to classroom learning.** Schools must facilitate and support teachers' efforts to build relationships with parents and provide increased opportunities for parent involvement at school and at home.

**Promote early intervention programs designed to strengthen and reinforce the role of families in children's growth and development.** Programs must be established to link families to education, health, and social services agencies during a child's preschool years.

**Use all available resources to implement and evaluate**. School districts must maximize existing state, federal, and local resources and form partnerships with public and private sources.

In addition, the state department of education can work with university training programs to:

**I. Provide preservice training and resources to help prospective teachers develop skills in working with families and in encouraging and increasing parent involvement.** Examples of activities:

» Publishing a brochure for teachers to show them how to involve parents in the education of their children at home

» Coordinating a parent involvement conference for teacher educators and prospective teachers that focuses on designing and implementing home-learning practices and activities

» Continuing to publish a semiannual newsletter for teacher educators, prospective teachers, and school district personnel on a variety of topics for parent involvement

**II. Train school teachers and administrators on strategies for family-school partnerships.**

One way to facilitating this process is to incorporate workshop topics, modules and materials that address the cultural diversity of families and ways that school administrators and teachers can build partnerships with families, are as follows:

» Families as Home-Learning Environments

» School System Policies and Supports

» School Practices that Foster Home Learning

» Teachers' Practices to Engage and Assist Parents

The department can provide or identify others who will provide, on request, in-service training on parent involvement for district level and site-level administrators. Other activities might include:

» Producing training videos and materials to convey the importance of family involvement and focus on guidelines, strategies for change, and effective practices for enhancing parents' involvement in home learning and in volunteering and decision making at school

» Identifying experts at the national, state, and local levels and in higher education to provide technical assistance and training to school administrators and teachers on building relationships with families and on designing and implementing site-level parent involvement programs.

» Developing a booklet for school administrators on strategies to involve parents effectively in school operations

Excerpted and adapted from the California Strategic Plan For Parent Involvement In Education: Recommendations for Transforming Schools Through Family-Community-School Partnerships. California DOE

## IV. Examples of Current Activity
### *F. Preparing Teachers in Family Involvement*

The following excerpt is from *New Skills for New Schools: Preparing Teachers in Family Involvement* by Angela Shartrand, Heather Weiss, Holly Kreider, M. Elena Lopez of the Harvard Family Research Project – (http://gseweb.harvard.edu/~hfrp )

NOTE: This framework begins with general knowledge about family contributions to child development & school achievement, & then builds toward specialized knowledge such as ways in which schools can support families & families can support schools.

## Family Involvement Framework for Teacher Training

### *General Family Involvement*
Goals: To provide general information on the goals of, benefits of, & barriers to family involvement. To promote knowledge of, skills in, & positive attitudes toward involving parents.

### *General Family Knowledge*
Goals: To promote knowledge of different families' cultural beliefs, child rearing practices, structures, & living environments. To promote an awareness of & respect for different backgrounds & lifestyles.

### *Home-School Communication*
Goals: To provide various techniques & strategies to improve two-way communication between home & school (and/or parent & teacher).

### *Family Involvement in Learning Activities*
Goals: To provide information on how to involve parents in their children's learning outside of the classroom.

### *Families Supporting Schools*
Goals: To provide information on ways to involve parents in helping the school, both within & outside the classroom.

### *Schools Supporting Families*
Goals: To examine how schools can support families' social, educational, & social service needs through parent education programs, parent centers, & referrals to other community or social services.

### *Families as Change Agents*
To introduce ways to support & involve parents & families in decision making, action research, child advocacy, parent & teacher training, & development of policy, programs, & curriculum.

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**Promising Methods for Teacher Preparation (Chapter 4)**
~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~

The nine programs featured in this report shared common innovative practices. These practices focused on developing prospective teachers' problem-solving skills by exposing them to challenging situations which required them to negotiate sensitive issues. The programs also provided them with opportunities to work in schools & communities -- often under the guidance of experienced professionals -- where they were able to gain valuable communication & interpersonal skills, especially when dealing with families with very different backgrounds from their own. These community experiences also gave them the opportunity to develop collaborative skills with professionals from other disciplines. In addition, the programs emphasized the application of research skills to develop a better understanding of families & communities. They encouraged the use of information about families to develop family involvement activities & to create supplemental materials for classroom use.

These programs utilized guest speakers, role play, the case method, community experiences, research with families & communities, self-reflection, &

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These programs utilized guest speakers, role play, the case method, community experiences, research with families & communities, self-reflection, & interprofessional education.

**GUEST SPEAKERS.** Attending guest lectures & discussions led by parents, practicing teachers, experts from other disciplines, or co-instructors in teacher education courses provides prospective teachers opportunities to learn from & interact with key players in children's education. Program faculty & researchers alike attested to the benefits of drawing upon the expertise of parents, school personnel, & faculty in other disciplines to enrich teacher preparation.

### Examples of Guest Speakers

* Program graduates, who researched family involvement during their own teacher preparation programs, talked about what they had learned from their projects & how they had applied that knowledge to their first weeks of teaching.
* A parent-school coordinator, parents with special needs children, social work faculty, & special educators described how Individual Family Service Plans are developed with families. A home-school coordinator spoke to prospective teachers about her work & discussed ways in which teachers could promote family involvement.
* A human development counseling specialist presented a parent effectiveness training model & discussed skills to use in parent-teacher conferences.

**ROLE PLAY.** Role play requires students to act out situations that they might face when working with parents. Role play gives prospective teachers simulated experience in communicating, handling difficult or threatening situations, & resolving conflict. By dramatizing situations, prospective teachers become emotionally engaged & learn in a "hands-on" manner about the situations that they will face in their classrooms.

Because role play usually takes place in the university classroom, teacher educators can analyze their students' reactions & responses, & peers can give feedback. By alternately playing the roles of teacher & parent, prospective teachers can gain a better understanding of each perspective.

### Examples of Role Play Scenarios

* Negotiating differences of opinion with a parent
* Communicating with a parent about his or her child's poor performance or behavior
* Conducting a parent-teacher conference
* Discussing a student portfolio with a parent
* Explaining a new curriculum to a parent
* Talking with a parent who is angry or upset

**CASE METHOD.** In the case method, prospective teachers read about dilemmas or ambiguous situations that could arise in working with parents. After reading the cases, these students analyze & discuss them, referring to their own relevant experiences & to the theories & principles covered in class.

Because the case method approach encourages prospective teachers to examine many possible responses to a particular situation, & to evaluate the merits & drawbacks of each of these responses, they are able to understand the complexities of home-school relationships. Students' analyses of these situations help them develop crucial problem-solving skills. The case method also offers students the opportunity to integrate their beliefs with known theories as they respond to complex & problematic, real-life situations (Hochberg, 1993).

### Examples of the Case Method

* One program used a case study example in which a young girl in a program for migrant workers had difficulty being understood because she always held her hand over her mouth when she spoke. A month into the program, the girl's teacher met the mother & discovered that she also spoke with her hand in front of her mouth, to hide the fact that she had no teeth. This case demonstrated that the child's communication problems were the result of her modeling her mother's behavior. The class looked at this case from multiple perspectives. The goal was for students to avoid jumping to conclusions or making assumptions about children or families.

* Another program presented a case in which a parent & teacher had different agendas for a parent-teacher conference. To analyze the case, students wrote a 15-page response to the parent, drawing from 1 of the developmental frameworks presented in class. Responses were read aloud to classmates acting in the role of the parent, who then gave feedback from that perspective.

**CULTURAL IMMERSION.** One way to learn about children from diverse ethnic backgrounds is to live as they do. Cultural immersion is especially helpful when the teaching force & student body come from different cultural and/or economic backgrounds.

### Examples of Cultural Immersion

* In a former program at Clark Atlanta University, prospective teachers, along with social work students, had the option of living in housing projects with the children & families whom they would one day serve.
* At Northern Arizona University, prospective teachers in special education can live & student teach on a Navajo reservation.

**COMMUNITY EXPERIENCES.** During placement in community settings, such as human service agencies, children's homes, & community centers, prospective teachers can learn about services in the community & form relationships with family & community members in a nonschool context.

In programs that prepare teachers to work in urban schools or in communities with linguistic & cultural diversity, community experiences tend to be emphasized. These experiences allow prospective teachers to see children in a variety of settings, become more visible in the community, & understand children's sociocultural contexts.

### Examples of Community Experience

* At UTEP, the community experience component was designed by parents who were asked what they thought teachers should know about their children's community. The experience began with a tour of major service agencies in the community, including libraries, urban leagues, & community centers with educational components.
* Community experiences can also include

helping families & communities. Working in a neighborhood center, teaching ESL to parents, & providing weekend respite care for a family with a disabled child are some of the numerous ways in which prospective teachers are able to assist families & communities.
* The "Parent Buddy Project" arranges for prospective teachers to visit a family's home several times a semester. Sometimes "buddies" will offer to babysit so that parents can go to PTA meetings. In this way, the project not only helps prospective teachers learn about family life, it also helps parents become more involved with their children's education.

**RESEARCH WITH FAMILIES & COMMUNITIES.** Research with families & communities can range from parent surveys to in-depth ethnographic interviews with families. This method offers teachers the opportunity to understand issues from the perspective of families & communities & to utilize their expertise & insight. Teachers can learn from & interact with families of different cultural & economic backgrounds as they conduct their research.

According to one program respondent, this method sends the message: "I want to get to know you," rather than "I'm here to teach you something."

### Examples of Research Projects with Families & Communities

Prospective teachers have:
* developed a parent questionnaire or entrance inventory after working with at least 5 parents of children with special needs & written a summary of findings.
* interviewed their own parents about their respective childhood experiences.
* interviewed families who had a child with special needs. The prospective teachers then reflected on what they had learned from the family & on the implications for working with children.
* conducted ethnographic interviews in children's homes to gather & document household knowledge. The information collected was then used to develop lesson plans.

* "shadowed" a child to gather information about the child's health, physical education, & social

development & asked parents & family & community members for information.
* produced a book of research abstracts based on the prospective teachers' research with parents.

**SELF-REFLECTION.** Self-reflection techniques include journal writing & other assignments that ask teachers to think about their own family backgrounds, their assumptions about other families, & their attitudes toward working with families. The goal is for prospective teachers to consider how their own perspectives will influence their work with families, especially those very different from their own.

Self-reflection can be combined with other methods used to teach family involvement. It helps teachers process what they are learning & make the experiences personally meaningful. Self- reflection is also useful for addressing cultural differences. Finally, this method helps prospective teachers uncover any negative feelings & assumptions that they might have which may inhibit them from building positive relationships between home & school.

### Assignments for Self-Reflection

* When discussing social development, prospective teachers in one program reflect on their own social development & on the ways in which their teachers influenced them. This introspection helps prospective teachers examine their own beliefs & learn how these beliefs might influence their future work with families.
* One faculty member teaches about issues of power in society (gender & minority status, for example) by asking students to analyze their own cultural perspectives (such as their cultural history, language, & literacy).
* In one program, prospective teachers are asked to look at their own cultural experiences &

history, think about the match between their family community culture & their school culture, & then discuss ways in which some children's home & school cultures differ.

**INTERPROFESSIONAL EDUCATION.** Interprofessional education is a new trend in preparing human service professionals. Schools of nursing, social work, & other disciplines join with schools of education to prepare teachers & other professionals working with children & families. The purpose of this strategy is to train a range of human service professionals to work more closely with one another, to work in an increasingly collaborative environment, & to deliver services more effectively to families by placing them at the center of the human service system.

### Examples of Interprofessional Education

* One program unites a school of education & an anthropology department to find new ways of working with families.
* Another program brings teachers, administrators, & counselors together in an intensive family involvement training experience.

Comprehensive interprofessional training programs have the potential to prepare teachers & other human service professionals to work effectively with families. For example, teachers involved in such training programs will be better prepared to identify children's & families' nonacademic support needs & refer them to appropriate outside agencies & personnel. Promising models are currently being developed at Ohio State University, the University of Washington in Seattle, & Miami University in Ohio.

# IV. Examples of Current Activity

## *G. Engaging and Re-engaging Families When a Student is Not Doing Well*

Most efforts to involve parents with their child's school seem aimed at those who want and are able to come to the school. It's important to have activities for such parents. It's also important to remember that, at most schools, these parents represent a small percent of families.

How can schools address the rest? Especially those whose children are doing poorly at school. Ironically, efforts to involve families whose youngsters are doing poorly often result in parents becoming less involved. For example, a parent of such a youngster typically is called to school to explore the child's problems and leaves with a sense of frustration, anger, and guilt. It is not surprising, then, that the parent subsequently avoids school contact as much as feasible. If schools really want to involve such families, they must minimize "finger wagging" and move to offer something more than parent education classes.

### Start by Understanding Barriers to Home Involvement

Analyses of the problem of enhancing home involvement underscore a host of barriers. Our analysis leads us to group three types: institutional, personal, and impersonal and three forms: negative attitudes, lack of mechanisms/skills, and practical deterrents – including lack of resources.

A few words will help clarify the categories. Institutional barriers stem from deficiencies related to resource availability (money, space, time) and administrative use of what is available. Deficient use of resources includes failure to establish and maintain formal home involvement mechanisms and related skills. It also encompasses general lack of interest or hostile attitudes toward home involvement among school staff, the administration, or the community. Instances of deficient use of resources occur when there is no policy commitment to facilitating home involvement, when inadequate provisions are made for interacting with family members who don't speak English, or when no resources are devoted to upgrading the skills of staff with respect to home involvement.

Similar barriers occur on a more personal level. Specific school personnel or family members may lack requisite skills or find participation uncomfortable because it demands time and other resources. Others may lack interest or feel hostile toward home involvement.
For instance, any given teacher or family member may feel it is too much of an added burden to meet to discuss student problems. Others may feel threatened because they think they can't make the necessary interpersonal connections due to racial, cultural, and/or language differences. Still others do not perceive available activities as worth their time and effort.

Impersonal barriers to home and staff participation are commonplace and rather obvious. For example, there can be practical problems related to work schedules, transportation, and childcare. There can also be skill deficiencies related to cultural differences and levels of literacy. There may be lack of interest due to insufficient information about the importance of home involvement.

Overcoming barriers, of course, is a primary intervention concern. As indicated in the following Exhibit, the first emphasis should be on reducing institutional and impersonal barriers as much as is feasible.

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Exhibit

**Examples of a Focus on Addressing Barriers to Home Involvement in Schooling**

- **Improving mechanisms for communication and connecting school and home** (e.g., facilitating opportunities at school for family networking and mutual support, learning, recreation, enrichment, and for family members to receive special assistance and to volunteer to help; facilitating child care and transportation to reduce barriers to coming to school; language translation; phone calls and/or e-mail from teacher and other staff with good news; frequent and balanced conferences – student-led when feasible; outreach to attract and facilitate participation of hard-to-reach families – including student dropouts)

- **Addressing specific support and learning needs of families** (e.g., support services for those in the home to assist in addressing basic survival needs and obligations to the children; adult education classes to enhance literacy, job skills, English-as-a-second language, citizenship preparation)

- **Involving homes in student decision making** (e.g., families prepared for involvement in program planning and problem-solving)

- **Enhancing home support for learning and development** (e.g., family literacy; family homework projects; family field trips)

- **Recruiting families to strengthen school and community** (e.g., volunteers to welcome and support new families and help in various capacities; families prepared for involvement in school governance)

- **Capacity building of all stakeholders related to enhancing home involvement**

Note: Our Center provides a range of resources for home involvement in general and for outreach to families of struggling students in particular. A place to start is with the survey on home involvement; see
    http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/pdfdocs/toolsforpractice/homeinvolvementsurvey.pdf .

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## About Engagement and Re-engagement

Understanding the concept of engagement is key to understanding ways to overcome reluctance. Engagement has three facets: behavioral, emotional, and cognitive (Fredricks, Blumenfeld, & Paris, 2004).\* Enhancing engagement requires moving from practices that overrely on the use of reinforcers to strategies that incorporate intrinsic motivation theory and research (Deci, 2009).\*\* From this perspective, it becomes evident how essential it is to avoid processes that (a) mainly

emphasize "remedying" problems, (b) limit options, and (c) make family members feel controlled and coerced.

Research indicates that engagement is associated with positive outcomes and is higher when conditions are supportive, authentic, ensure opportunities for choice and provide sufficient structure. Conversely, disengagement is associated with threats to feelings of competence, self-determination, and/or relatedness to valued others. Maintaining engagement and re-engaging disconnected individuals requires minimizing conditions that negatively affect intrinsic motivation and maximizing conditions that have a positive motivational effect. Practices for preventing disengagement and efforts to re-engage disconnected families require minimizing conditions that negatively affect intrinsic motivation and maximizing those that enhance it.

Re-engagement provides a major challenge. The challenge is greatest when negative experiences in dealing with the school have resulted in a strong desire to avoid contact.

Obviously, it is no easy task to reverse well-assimilated negative attitudes and behaviors. As with disconnected students, personalized intervention strategies are required. Our work suggests the importance of outreaching to

- *ask individuals to share their perceptions of the reasons for their disengagement;* (This provides an invaluable basis for formulating a personalized plan to alter their negative perceptions and to prevent others from developing such perceptions.)

- *reframe the reasons for and the processes related to home involvement to establish a good fit with the family's needs and interests;* (The intent is to shift perceptions so that the process is viewed as supportive, not controlling, and the outcomes are perceived as personally valuable and obtainable.)

- *renegotiate involvement;* (The intent is to arrive at a mutual agreement with a delineated process for reevaluating and modifying the agreement as necessary.)

- *reestablish and maintain an appropriate working relationship.* (This requires the type of ongoing interactions that over a period of time enhance mutual understanding, provide mutual support, open-up communication, and engender mutual trust and respect.)

## Concluding Comments

Policy may call for and mandate "parent" involvement, but that has been no guarantee of effective practice. The problem is especially acute in middle and secondary schools, schools serving low income homes, and with respect to families who feel blamed when their child is not doing well at school.

As we stress in other Center resources, enhancing home involvement requires greater attention to the full range of caretakers. Think about students who are being raised primarily by grandparents, aunts, older siblings, foster home caretakers, and "nannies." Thus, for schools to significantly enhance home involvement will require (1) broadening the focus beyond thinking only in terms of parents and (2) enhancing the range of ways in which schools connect with primary caretakers. Particular attention must be given to outreaching to those who are reluctant to engage with the school, especially if they have a child who is not doing well.

Also, to avoid marginalization and minimize fragmentation, it is essential to embed home involvement interventions into an overall approach for addressing factors interfering with school learning and performance and fully integrate the work into school improvement policy and practice.

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*Fredricks, J., Blumenfeld, P., & Paris, A. (2004). School engagement: Potential of the concept, state of the evidence. *Review of Educational Research, 74*, 59-109.
**Deci, E.L. (2009). Large-scale school reform as viewed from the self-determination theory perspective. *Theory and Research in Education, 7*, 244-252.

*Your mom said that she never saw this report*
*I sent her about your work.*
  *What do you know about that?*

*Gee, I guess the dog has been eating*
*more than my homework.*

# V. Helping Parents to Help Their Children

A. Helping Parents Become Better
   Educators at Home

B.  Parent Discussion Groups: An Example

C. Examples of Flyers and Invitations
    to Parents

D. Examples of Feedback Materials

E.  Example of Addressing Diversity

# V. Helping Parents to Help Their Children
## A. Helping Parents Become Better Educators at Home

On the following pages is information about and some excerpts from various guides and resources designed to help parents with their children's education.

*(1) Leader's Guide to Parent and Family Involvement* -Excerpts from sections 10 & 11
[ http://www.pta.org/archive_article_details_1117835382718.html
http://www.pta.org/archive_article_details_1118088722562.html ]

## *Parents Are Their Children's First Teachers*

From birth to young adulthood, children depend on their parents to supply what they need—physically, emotionally, and socially—to grow and learn. That's a big job description. Like other job skills, parenting skills do not come naturally. They must be learned. As a national child advocacy organization, the PTA is in an ideal position to guide parents to the resources they need to be the best parents they can be. Following are suggested ways:

**Provide parenting education classes and workshops.**
Emphasize that good parenting doesn't take a Ph.D. It takes courage, patience, commitment, and common sense. Work with school and community organizations to provide programs on topics that will appeal to diverse groups in your PTA—topics such as discipline, parents as role models, self-esteem in children and in parents, parenting the difficult child, and how to meet the demands of work and family.

**Help establish an early childhood PTA.**
The best time to prepare parents for their part in their children's education is before their children start school. Contact the National PTA or your state PTA for information on how to start an early childhood PTA.

**Establish family support programs.**
Cooperate with your school and community agencies to establish family resource and support programs. These might include peer support groups for single, working, and custodial parents; parenting or substance abuse hotlines; literacy or ESL classes; job skills programs; preschool and early childhood education programs, or drop-in centers for parents with young children. Make a special effort to address the needs of teen parents.

**Help publicize existing community resources.**
If quality family resource centers or support programs for your community already exist, compile and circulate a descriptive list of local services that are available for families. Many parents do not seek the help they need because they are unaware that help exists.

**Provide programs and opportunities for learning.**
Show parents how to set the stage for learning at home. Conduct meetings and circulate videos or fliers describing educational parent-child activities.

## *Learning Begins at Home*

Parents can set the stage for learning in everyday activities at home. Here's how.
- Set a good example by reading.
- Read to your children, even after they can read independently. Set aside a family reading time. Take turns reading aloud to each other.
- Take your children to the library regularly. Let them see you checking out books for yourself, too.

- Build math and reasoning skills together. Have young children help sort laundry, measure ingredients for a recipe, or keep track of rainfall for watering the lawn. Involve teens in researching and planning for a family vacation or a household project, such as planting a garden or repainting a room.
- Regulate the amount and content of the television your family watches. Read the weekly TV listing together and plan shows to watch. Monitor the use of videos and interactive game systems.
- Encourage discussions. Play family games. Practice good sportsmanship.
- Ask specific questions about school. Show your children that school is important to you so that it will be important to them.
- Help your children, especially teens, manage time. Make a chart showing when chores need to be done and when assignments are due.
- Volunteer. Build a sense of community and caring by giving of your time and energy. Choose projects in which children and teens can take part, too.

## *How Parents Can Help with Homework*

- Parents encourage good study habits by establishing homework routines early, such as the following:
- Come to an agreement with each of your children on a regular time and place for homework.
- Try to schedule homework time for when you or your children's caregiver can supervise.
- Make sure your children understand their assignments.
- Sign and date your young children's homework. Teachers appreciate knowing that the parents are interested enough to check over their children's homework and see that it is finished.
- Follow up on assignments by asking to see your children's homework after it has been returned by the teacher. Look at the teacher's comments to see if your children have done the assignment correctly.
- Discuss teachers' homework expectations during parent-teacher conferences.
- Don't do your children's homework. Make sure they understand that homework is their responsibility.
- Be sure to praise your children for a job well done. Encourage the good work that your children do, and comment about improvements they have made.

Your PTA can further encourage parents by working with teachers to plan workshops, develop strategies, and prepare handouts on how parents can help with homework. See the National PTA/NEA brochure on Helping Your Student Get the Most Out of Homework. – http://www.nea.org/parents/homework.html

*(2) Guiding Parents in Helping Children Learn* – From the Center for Mental Health in Schools at UCLA – online at http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/pdfdocs/guiding/contents.pdf

This document is designed for use by those who work with parents and other nonprofessionals. It contains three types of resources:

(1) The first is a "booklet" written for nonprofessionals to help them understand what is involved in helping children learn.

(2) The second consists of information about basic resources professionals can draw on to learn more about helping parents and other nonprofessionals enhance children's learning and performance.

(3) The third includes additional guides and basic information to share with parents as resources they can use to enhance a child's learning and performance.

### (3) Partnership for Family Involvement in Education
[Excerpts from the document which can be accessed at
http://www.ed.gov/pubs/PFIE/families.html ]

**Read together**

Children who read at home with their parents perform better in school. Show your kids how much you value reading by keeping good books, magazine, and newspapers in the house. Let them see you read. Take them on trips to the library and encourage them to get library cards. Let children read to you, and talk about the books. What was the book about? Why did a character act that way? What will he or she do next?

Look for other ways to teach children the magic of language, words, and stories. Tell stories to your children about their families and their culture. Point out words to children wherever you go -- to the grocery, to the pharmacy, to the gas station. Encourage your children to write notes to grandparents and other relatives.

**Use TV wisely**

Academic achievement drops sharply for children who watch more than 10 hours of television a week, or an average of more than two hours a day. Parents can limit the amount of viewing and help children select educational programs. Parents can also watch and discuss shows with their kids. This will help children understand how stories are structured.

**Establish a daily family routine with scheduled homework time**

Studies show that successful students have parents who create and maintain family routines. Make sure your child goes to school every day. Establish a regular time for homework each afternoon or evening, set aside a quiet, well lit place, and encourage children to study. Routines generally include time performing chores, eating meals together, and going to bed at an established time.

**Talk to your children and teenagers -- and listen to them, too**

Talk directly to your children, especially your teenagers, about the dangers of drugs and alcohol and the values you want them to have. Set a good example. And listen to what your children have to say. Such personal talks, however uncomfortable they may make you feel, can save their lives.

**Express high expectations for children by enrolling them in challenging courses**

You can communicate to your children the importance of setting and meeting challenges in school. Tell your children that working hard and stretching their minds in the only way for them to realize their full potential. Expect and encourage your children to take tough academic courses like geometry, chemistry, computer technology, a second language, art, and advanced occupational courses. Make sure they never settle for doing less than their best.

**Find out whether your school has high standards**

Your school should have clear, challenging standards for what students should know. For example, what reading, writing and math skills is your child expected to have by fourth grade? By eighth and twelfth grades? What about history, science, the arts, geography, and other languages? Are responsibility and hard work recognized? If your school doesn't have high standards, join with teachers, principals, and other parents to set these standards.

**Keep in touch with the school**

Parents cannot afford to wait for schools to tell them how children are doing. Families who stay informed about their children's progress at school have higher-achieving children. To keep informed, parents can visit the school or talk with teachers on the telephone. Get to know the names of your children's teachers, principals, and counselors.
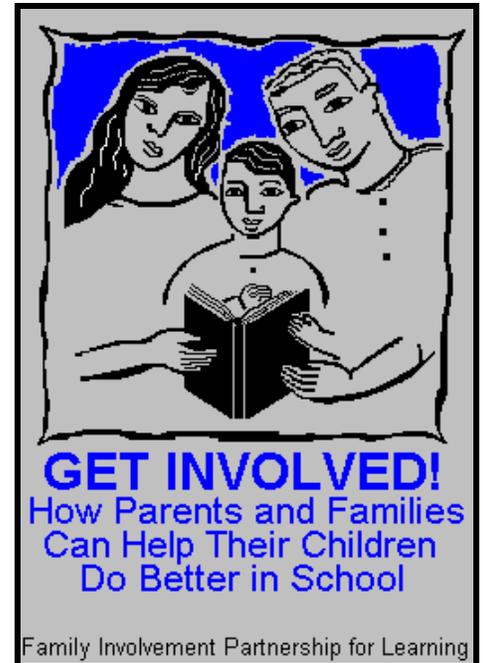
Parents can also work with schools to develop new ways to get more involved. Families can establish a homework hotline, volunteer on school planning and decision-making committees, help create family resource centers, serve as mentors, and even help patrol school grounds.

## Use community resource
Activities sponsored by community and religious organizations provide opportunities for children and other family members to engage in positive social and learning experiences. Family- oriented community resources may include health care services, housing assistance, adult education, family literacy, and employment counseling. Families can reinforce their children's learning by going to libraries, museums, free concerts, and cultural fairs together.

***When parents and families get personally involved in education, their children do better in school and grow up to be more successful in life.***

Sounds like common sense, doesn't it?

Yet parental involvement is one of the most overlooked aspects of American education today. The fact is, many parents don't realize how important it is to get involved in their children's learning. As one dad said when he began to read to his daughter ever day and discovered that it improved her learning, "I never realized how much it would mean to her to hear me read." Other parents would like to be involved, but have trouble finding the time.

All parents and family members should try to find the time and make the effort because research shows that when families get involved, their children:

- Get better grades and test scores.
- Graduate from high school at higher rates.
- Are more likely to go on to higher education.
- Are better behaved and have more positive attitudes

Family involvement is also one of the best investments a family can make. Students who graduate from high school earn, on average, $200,000 more in their lifetimes than students who drop out. College graduate makes almost $1 million more!

Most important of all, ALL parents and families can enjoy these benefits. It doesn't matter how much money you have. It doesn't matter how much formal education you've had yourself or how well you did in school. And family involvement works for children at all grade levels.

## What is "Family Involvement in Education"?
It's a lot of different types of activities. Some parents and families may have the time to get involved in many ways. Other may only have the time for one or two activities. But whatever your level of involvement, remember: If you get involved and stay involved, you can make a world of difference.

Family involvement in education can mean: Reading a bedtime story to your preschool child...checking homework every night...getting involved in PTA...discussing your children's progress with teachers...voting in school board elections...helping your school to set challenging academic standards...limiting TV viewing to no more than two hours on school nights...getting personally involved in governing your school...becoming an advocate for better education in your community and state...and insisting on high standards of behavior for children.

Or, family involvement can be as simple as asking your children, "How was school today?" But ask every day. That will send your children the clear message that their schoolwork is important to you and you expect them to learn.

Many children and parents are yearning for this kind of togetherness these days. Among student aged 10 to 13, for example, 72 percent say they would like to talk to their parents more about their homework. Forty percent of parents across the country believe that they are not devoting enough time to their children's education. And teachers say that increasing parental involvement in education should be the number one priority for public education in the next few years.

## (4) Helping with Homework: A Parent's Guide to Information Problem-Solving (1996)
by Robert E Berkowitz. ERIC Digest. ED402950

### INTRODUCTION

Parents can play an important role in helping their children succeed in school, but they need an effective approach in order to do this well. The approach taken in the book, "Helping with Homework: A Parent's Guide to Information Problem-Solving," is based on the Big Six Skills problem- solving approach. The Big Six Skills apply to any problem or activity that requires a solution or result based on information. An abundance of information is available from many sources, and the Big Six can help parents effectively deal with that information to guide their youngsters through school assignments.

### THE BIG SIX APPROACH

The Big Six approach has six components: task definition, information seeking strategies, location and access, use of information, synthesis, and evaluation.

(1) Task Definition: In the task definition stage, students need to determine what is expected from the assignment.

(2) Information Seeking Strategies: Once students know what's expected of them, they need to identify the resources they will need to solve the task as defined. This is information seeking.

(3) Location & Access: Next, the students must find potentially useful resources. This is location and access--the implementation of the information seeking strategy.

(4) Use of Information: Use of information requires the students to engage the information (e.g., read it) and decide how to use it (e.g., in text or in a footnote).

(5) Synthesis: Synthesis requires the students to repackage the information to meet the requirements of the task as defined.

(6) Evaluation: Finally, students need to evaluate their work on two levels before it is turned in to the teacher. Students need to know if their work will meet their teacher's expectations for quality and efficiency.

The Big Six steps may be applied in any order, but all steps must be completed.

### PARENTS' ROLE AND STUDENTS' ROLE

The Big Six approach requires parents and students to assume different roles. The parent assumes the role of a "coach" and the child assumes the role of "thinker and doer." As a coach, the parent can use the Big Six Skills to guide the student through all the steps it takes to complete the assignment. Parents can help by first asking their children to explain assignments in their own words. This is "task definition"--a logical first step.

Parents can also help by discussing possible sources of information. This is "information seeking strategies." Parents can then help their children implement information seeking strategies by helping their children find useful resources. This is the Big Six step called "location and access." Location and access may have to be repeated during an assignment because some children may not identify everything they need right at the beginning. Parents can facilitate by brainstorming with their children alternate places where information might be available. In the "use of information" stage, parents can discuss whether the information the child located is relevant and if so, help the child decide how to use it. In the "synthesis" stage, parents can ask for a summary of the information in the child's own words, and ask whether the information meets the requirements identified in the "task definition" stage. The end of any assignment is the final check--an evaluation of all the work that has been done. Parents can help their children with the "evaluation"

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stage by discussing whether the product answers the original question, whether it meets the teacher's expectations, and whether the project could have been done more efficiently.

As children work through each of the Big Six steps, they need to think about what they need to do, and then they need to find appropriate ways to do it. This is their role--"thinker and doer." Children should be encouraged to be as independent as possible, but they will often have difficulty beginning an assignment because they are confused about what is expected of them. Whatever the reason is for their inability to get started, students have the ultimate responsibility for getting their work done. When parents act as coaches, they can help their children assume this responsibility by engaging them in conversation about what is expected of them, and then by guiding them throughout the assignment using the Big Six Skills.

### WHY ASSIGNMENTS?

Assignments provide students with an opportunity to review and practice new material, to correct errors in understanding and production, and to assess levels of mastery. Every assignment is an information problem that can be solved using the Big Six. For instance, the goal of many assignments is to have the students practice a skill taught in class. If a child is having a problem understanding

an assignment, the parent may help by encouraging the child to explain what it is he or she does not understand. The parent can use information seeking strategies to help the child identify information sources by asking questions such as: "Is there another student in your class, who can help you understand how to do this?" or, "Did the teacher give any other examples?" The parent can help the child identify information sources and suggest ways to get them. For instance, the public television network may have a homework hotline, the public library may have study guides, or a neighborhood child may be in the same class.

### TECHNOLOGY AND THE BIG SIX

The Big Six approach recognizes the benefits of technology in education because computers are tools that help organize information. Software programs do a variety of functions such as edit written work, check grammar and spelling, chart and graph quantities, and construct outlines. Computers can also help with time management, setting priorities, and evaluating efficiency.

Using the Internet, students can connect to many non-traditional sources of information and are not limited to information contained on library shelves. They can use e-mail to talk directly with specialists and experts who can add a personal dimension to an assignment.

### CONCLUSION

It is an axiom of American education that parents are partners in their children's education. Parents have traditionally participated by helping their children with homework. The Big Six approach can help parents effectively guide their children through assignments and at the same time help their children become independent learners and users of information.

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## (5) If an Adolescent Begins To Fail in School, What Can Parents and Teachers Do?
(1997) by Anne Robertson. ERIC Digest. ED415001

"How was school today?" Carol's mother asked tentatively."Awful " was the reply as Carol dropped her backpack in the middle of the kitchen floor and started stomping up the stairs to her bedroom. "It was the worst day ever. I don't know why you even bother to ask me " Carol's mother sighed. She had expected that the teen years would be difficult, but she hoped that Carol would grow out of this difficult time soon.

### IS THIS SIMPLY A "PHASE?"

Many teens experience a time when keeping up with school work is difficult. These periods may last several weeks and may include social problems as well as a slide in academic performance. Research suggests that problems are more likely to occur during a transitional year, such as moving from elementary to middle school, or middle school to high school (Baker & Sansone,1990; Pantleo, 1992). Some adolescents are able to get through this time with minimal assistance from their parents or teachers. It may be enough for a parent to be available simply to listen and suggest coping strategies, provide a supportive home environment, and encourage the child's participation in school activities. However, when the difficulties last longer than a single grading period, or are linked to a long-term pattern of poor school performance or problematic behaviors, parents and teachers may need to intervene.

### IDENTIFYING ADOLESCENTS WHO ARE AT RISK FOR FAILURE

Some "at-risk" indicators, such as those listed here, may represent persistent problems from the early elementary school years for some children (Jacobsen & Hofmann, 1997; O'Sullivan, 1989). Other students may overcome early difficulties but begin to experience related problems during middle school or high school. For others, some of these indicators may become noticeable only in early adolescence. To intervene effectively, parents and teachers can be aware of some common indicators of an adolescent at risk for school failure, including:

- Attention problems as a young child--the student has a school history of attention issues or disruptive behavior.

- Multiple retentions in grade--the student has been retained one or more years.

- Poor grades--the student consistently performs at barely average or below average levels.

- Absenteeism--the student is absent five or more days per term.

- Lack of connection with the school--the student is not involved in sports, music, or other school- related extracurricular activities.

- Behavior problems--the student may be frequently disciplined or show a sudden change in school behavior, such as withdrawing from class discussions.

- Lack of confidence--the student believes that success is linked to native intelligence rather than hard work, and believes that his or her own ability is insufficient, and nothing can be done to change the situation.

- Limited goals for the future--the student seems unaware of career options available or how to attain those goals.

When more than one of these attributes characterizes an adolescent, the student will likely need assistance from both parents and teachers to complete his or her educational experience successfully. Girls, and students from culturally or linguistically diverse groups, may be especially at risk for academic failure if they exhibit these behaviors (Steinberg, 1996; Debold, 1995). Stepping back and letting these students "figure it out" or "take responsibility for their own learning" may lead to a deeper cycle of failure within the school environment.

### ADOLESCENTS WANT TO FEEL CONNECTED TO THEIR FAMILY, SCHOOL, TEACHERS, AND PEERS

In a recent survey, when students were asked to evaluate their transitional years, they indicated interest in connecting to their new school and requested more information about extracurricular activities, careers, class schedules, and study skills. Schools that develop programs that ease transitions for students and increase communication between

schools may be able to reduce student failure rates (Baker & Sansone, 1990; Pantleo, 1992). Some schools make a special effort to keep in touch with their students. One example is the Young Adult Learning Academy (YALA), a successful alternative school for adolescent dropouts. According to YALA's director, Peter Klienbard, if a student at YALA appears to be having a problem or family emergency, teachers and counselors follow up quickly (Siegel, 1996, p. 50).

## THE ROLE OF PARENTING STYLE

Parenting style may have an impact on the child's school behavior. Many experts distinguish among permissive, authoritarian, and authoritative parenting styles (Baumrind,1991). These parenting styles are associated with different combinations of warmth, support, and limit-setting and supervision for children. The permissive style tends to emphasize warmth and neglect limit-setting and supervision; the authoritarian style tends to emphasize the latter and not the former; while the authoritative style is one in which parents offer warmth and support, and limit-setting and supervision. When the authoritative parenting style is used, the adolescent may be more likely to experience academic success (Glasgow et al., 1997,p. 521). Authoritative parents are warm and responsive but are also able to establish and enforce standards for their children's behavior, monitor conduct, and encourage communication. Authoritative parents make clear that they expect responsible behavior from their child their adolescent or the school when their teen seems to be having difficulty. However, it is important to remember that adolescents need their parents not only to set appropriate expectations and boundaries, but also to advocate for them. Teachers can ease a parent's concerns by including the parent as part of the student's educational support team. When an adolescent is having difficulty, parents and teachers can assist by:

> » making the time to listen to and try to understand the teen's fears or concerns;

> » setting appropriate boundaries for behavior that are consistently enforced;

> » encouraging the teen to participate in one or more school activities;

> » attending school functions, sports, and plays;

> » meeting as a team, including parents, teachers, and school counselor, asking how they can support the teen's learning environment, and sharing their expectations for the child's future;

> » arranging tutoring or study group support for the teen from the school or the community through organizations such as the local YMCA or a local college or university;

> » providing a supportive home and school environment that clearly values education;

> » helping the child think about career options by arranging for visits to local companies and colleges, picking up information on careers and courses, and encouraging an internship or career-oriented part-time job;

> » encouraging the teen to volunteer in the community or to participate in community groups such as the YMCA, Scouting, 4-H, religious organizations, or other service-oriented groups to provide an out-of-school support system;

> » emphasizing at home and in school the importance of study skills, hard work, and follow-through.

## CONCLUSION

Understanding the factors that may put an adolescent at-risk for academic failure will help  parents determine if their teen is in need of extra support. Above all, parents need to persevere. The teen years do pass, and most adolescents survive them, in spite of bumps along the way. Being aware of common problems can help parents know when it is important to reach out and ask for help before a "difficult time" develops into a more serious situation.

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## V. Helping Parents to Help Their Children

### B. Parent Discussion Groups: An Example

>Rationale
>General Guidelines
>Strategies
>Review of Main Points
>Topics and Questions to Stimulate Discussion
>Illustrations of specific guidelines and
   related handouts
- School & Community Resources
- Resources for Parents
- Adjusting to New Situations
- Fears and Worries
- Arguing
- Ways to Encourage a Child
- How to Help your Child Study

## RATIONALE

The underlying rationale for offering parent discussion groups is to

- create an event that will attract parents to school
- provide a sense of personal support and accomplishment for those who attend
- clarify available services for children's problems
- introduce other opportunities for supportive parent involvement with the school.

The discussion groups themselves are guided by a wholistic orientation to parenting and the view that good parenting requires knowing how to problem solve with respect to facilitating child development. In particular, it is recognized that parents need greater awareness of

- the individual pace of child development and the range of individual differences among children
- what they can do to create an enriched and nurturing environment that allows a child to learn, grow, explore, and play in ways that will benefit the child at school and at home
- ways parents can be nurtured and supported in dealing with child rearing problems through involvement with other parents and school staff.

A variety of topics and handouts can be used to provide a stimulus for discussion. Examples follow. The materials reflect an effort to match specific questions and concerns parents tend to raise. That is, topics that most parents want to talk about are chosen because it is best to work with the group's specific interests. Topics are meant to be used in an interactive manner with the group; thus, as additional questions are raised, the group leader flexibly guides the discussion to deal with these matters.

## GENERAL GUIDELINES

A discussion group is a dynamic and interactive process. Each group is shaped by the specific concerns of the parents present. The following comments, however, address some of the most common features of the group.

*Procedural Considerations:*

Optimal size for a group discussion format is 8 to 15 parents. When the group exceeds 20 it seems to become more difficult for parents to share concerns and they become an "audience". In some groups, especially of families recently arrived in this country, participation may be minimal and the leader may need to be ready to share common problems and examples to initiate discussion.

Name tags are especially helpful in allowing the group to become familiar with each other and for the leader to address members by name.

**Strategies that seem to make for more effective discussions:**

Assist parents to see their problems are universal. They are important, shared by others, and not impossible to resolve.

Leaders attempt to facilitate rather than take an expert role with the right answers. Often the suggestions of other parents are the most helpful. The process is a discussion rather than a lecture. Sharing of ideas provides satisfaction.

There are usually group members who would like to talk privately with the leaders after the group. Time should be planned for this post-group consultation.

If someone in the group is inappropriate or dominates the discussion, validate the view and call on others to get more participation. Sometimes suggesting a one-to-one follow up for someone with a particularly difficult problem will allow the group to move to more commonly shared problems.

Often babies and young children will accompany the parents to the group. This can be distracting. If activities can be arranged in a separate part of the room and a resource person identified to supervise the children, it is less distracting to the group.

*There are advantages and disadvantages to the 2-3 meeting format.* The advantage is that the meetings are full of ideas and parents are very optimistic about trying new solutions. The disadvantage is there is no time to develop working relationships and to allow parents to modify solutions so they fit their particular situation.

*Topics usually discussed include* dressing and getting ready for school; rules and standards around eating; bed time problems; lack of response when a child is asked to do something; arguing with children or between children; bed wetting.

### *A Typical Family Discussion Group Might Go As Follows*

The group's leaders introduce themselves and tell about other services available as follow through on today's discussion. They stress the importance of early intervention with students who are shy or withdrawn or with those who are distracted or active.

*They talk in general about the role of parents.*

"It's a full-time job with no training. There are plenty of frustrations. We hope today's discussion allows you to think about ideas, about yourself, and about your child. There are no directions or specific answers.

> *If something works for you, even if other people don't do it that way, you probably don't need to change. For example, some people feel it's not a good idea to use sending a child to bed for punishment, but if it is effective in your family and there are no problems, that is something you don't want to alter.*

| We'd like to help you with problem-solving ideas for what's not working; what would you like to try?" |
| :---: |

At this point each parent is asked to introduce him or herself and give the  names and ages of their children.  The person with the most or the oldest children is often named the honorary group expert.

If there is no one who volunteers, go around the group and ask them to name two things about their children they wish were different and two things they like and don't want changed.  It is often clear to the group that there are more ideas about problems than about qualities.  This is a practical introduction into the importance of parents' positive contacts with their children.  Praise is the foundation of good parenting.  It is important to focus on the positives. As an example of the importance of praise, you might say:  If you cook your husband's favorite meal and he says, "Fantastic, thanks so much", imagine how great you would feel.  It would inspire you to continue to want to please.  We all want more praise.  Our children feel the same way.  When things are going well, it is important to let children know:  "Catch them being good."  Sometimes we're not only stingy with praise, but we ruin it.  Using sarcasm or linking a compliment with a criticism isn't praise.  For example: "Your room looks great; now don't you wish you kept it clean like this all the time?"

*Review of main points:*
> There are powerful alternatives to spanking, anger and yelling.  One of  these is praise. You need to initiate it, and this will take some practice. Try it and see how your youngster responds.

*This material is best interspersed with discussion, comments and examples from the group rather than as a lecture.*

Many parents have had some instruction in charting children's behaviors.  They often use this as a way to see that the child's behavior warrants praise.  What most have found, however, is that this contingency praise soon loses its effectiveness.  A more genuine and spontaneous use of praise can reinvigorate positive improvements.

Some parents who have had some experience with behavior modification express concerns about bribing their children and paying for good behavior.  Having them share their experiences and their concerns allows the leader to see what would be their next best step.  Agreeing that the use of material rewards often backfires validates their experience and concern.  Explaining how a broad range of positive feedback, such as special time with parents and focusing on the child's competence, can be more effective without the negative effects and can allow parents to rethink their responses.

Leaders usually bring along copies of handouts for parents that are usually relevant and helpful in typical groups.  One of these presents a range of options from praise to ignoring to mild social punishment.  Some time can be taken to review the handout with the parents and suggest ways to try new approaches.

The role of parents as models and their responsibilities to understand when they are responsible for setting limits as contrasted to situations where children need some choice in order to become responsible is discussed.

Often examples or problems are presented in ways that allow the leaders to set up demonstration or role play situations. The parent gets to play his or her child and the leader demonstrates the ideas being discussed. For example, a leader may walk up to the parent, look her in the eye, put an arm on her shoulder and say, "Thank you for cleaning your room." This allows the group to talk about the various verbal and nonverbal cues that were being used to increase the effectiveness of the parent's communication. **Parents are very powerful with their children and often constant battles and anger have caused each of them to be starved for love and contact.**

> *Leaders find that examples, humor and even sharing personal experiences facilitates the group discussion.*

*Parents are encouraged to use short, direct messages with their children.*

They are encouraged not to have only discussion or debates to convince children. In discussing the possible value of ignoring misbehavior, you may have to help parents take the risk of actually leaving the room so that they can literally ignore the behavior (some may point out that the child, not wanting to have the misbehavior ignored, will follow).

*Discussions of sibling rivalry are frequent topics.*

Parents are encouraged to think about spending special time alone with each child. The value of each child as a unique and special person can be communicated. Focus on what's good so others see what you want rather than always focusing on what you don't want or what you want stopped.

*In general, be aware of how you talk with your children.*

Observe yourself to see if your only conversation is giving orders and directions. Try to increase the time and attention you pay in listening to each child, playing with what they're interested in, not questioning but sharing. Observe the tone you use with your children. How often are you criticizing, questioning, cautioning?

*Think about your own experience at their age; did you love to do your homework?*

When you need to confront a child, take care in what you say. Often the questions you ask lead the child to deny or become evasive or defensive. Perhaps you want to say what you don't like and what needs to change (rather than getting into arguments and complications regarding whether the child admitted he or she is guilty). If you give ultimatums and make threats, you need to think carefully as to whether this will help and what it is you want as an outcome. Some interactions are very dramatic for children and are lessons they learn from you in how to solve problems. We often see that the child who hits on the school yard is the child who got hit at home.

## TOPICS AND QUESTIONS TO STIMULATE DISCUSSION

Examples of common topics parents are likely to be interested in discussing are understanding and dealing with specific behavior and school problems such as
- temper outbursts, aggression, and stubbornness
- trouble adjusting to new situations
- fearfulness and excessive shyness
- noncooperation and poor sharing
- stealing and lying
- learning difficulties

and

child developmental tasks such as
- understanding what's normal
- handling mealtime and bedtime
- helping a child learn responsibility and other values
- helping a child with schoolwork

Other popular topics are
- how to listen to and talk with a child
- discipline with love
- how parents can understand and express their own feelings
- concerns of single parents and step parents
- available school and community resources

## QUESTIONS TO STIMULATE DISCUSSION IN PARENT GROUPS

### Behavior: temper tantrums:
- When you get angry, how do you show it?
- Do you see your child saying or doing things when angry that they've seen you do and imitate?
- Sometimes when we're tired, we get angry more easily, do you see this happening with your child?
- What would you like to change about how you handle your anger?

### Building trust and confidence with your child:
- We often focus on problems instead of strengths. What are two things about your child that you like best?
- If  someone were to count, do you think they would find you complimenting and praising your child more or would you be criticizing your child more?  Why do you think this is so?
- How do you show your children that you love them? Through words?  actions? special times?
- Remembering back, how  did you feel your parents showed you that they loved you?

### Communication: Listening and talking with your child.
- What's the best time at your house to listen to what you child wants to tell you?
- Are you able to become interested in what your child wants to talk about? (even if it's just a    TV show or about toys)
- Talking to your child is an important way you teach, do you find it easy to talk with your child when you're alone together?

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### Cleaning up and learning responsibility:
- What's the normal routine at your house for getting going in the morning? What are your plans for what will happens? What actually happens?
- What specific things are your children responsible for?
- In what ways do you let your children know specifically what you expect from them?
- Are there ways your children help out without being asked? When they do, how do you respond?

### Discipline:
- When you hear the word discipline, what do you think of?
- We learn to be parents from our own parents? When you were young, how did your parents discipline you?
- Thinking back, what worked and what didn't?
- What do you wish your parents had done differently?
- Are you happy with the way you discipline your child?
- What would you want to change, and how could you change it?

### Fears and Worries:
- When our children have fears and worries it often prompts our own fears; perhaps we did something wrong as parents. Do you have such fears?
- When you feel insecure about your parenting, how do you handle your worries? Do you ask for help from others? Do you ask for reassurance? Try not to think about it?
- When your child is fearful, what is your reaction? Are you angry? Frustrated? Sympathetic?
- How do you reassure your child that he/she can master the fearful situation?

### What's normal:
- How do you feel about your child qualifying for this special program?
- What are you worried about regarding your child's entry into the regular school classroom?
- What have you noticed about your child that you think makes him/her different from other children?
- Do you feel frustrated in helping your child?
- Do you think your child will grow out of his or her problems?

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*The following examples illustrate specific guidelines and related handouts that can be used to stimulate discussion and provide parents with "take-away" resource material.*

## SCHOOL AND COMMUNITY RESOURCES

*Getting Started*

Many parents feel very much alone in raising their children. They may not have support in talking over their concerns, in sharing child care, or in getting information about what's available in their community. I'd like each of you to take a minute to think of one helpful resource in your neighborhood or community that you could share with the group. It could be a favorite park, baby sitter, pediatrician or friend. Let's go around the group and ask each of you to share a resource.

*Questions*

- Are there any concerns about resources that we haven't talked about?

- If you feel that this is a problem for you, what resources do you need that you don't have?

- Are there any suggestions on how to feel more supported and identify needed help?

*Summary*

There are many no cost and low cost resources for parents. If you feel you need some help, reach out. A phone call to a sympathetic person can mean a lot and you may be able to help others also.

*Plans for At-Home Application:*

If you need more help take a step toward getting it. Talk to your neighbors or other parents in the group to seek the support you need.

## RESOURCES FOR PARENTS

**Helpful Books**: (Get these at the library or check the bookstore for paperbacks.)
    *How To Parent* -- by Fitzhugh Dodson
        *Your Child's Self Esteem* -- by Dorothy Briggo
    *Raising A Responsible Child* -- Don Dinkmeyer
        *The Responsive Parent* -- by Mary Hoover

**Educational and Vocational Training for Parents\***:
    The Educational Opportunity Center on 318 Lincoln Blvd., Venice (392-4527) offers free advice and counseling to help persons locate schools and training and also to get financial aid to make it possible.

**Counseling for Parents and Children\***:
    Family Service of West Los Angeles, 400 So. Beverly Drive, (310) 277-3624.
    Thalians Child Guidance Center, Cedars Sinai, 855-3531.

**Information on Child Care Services\***:
    Child Care Referral Service, 1539 Euclid St., Santa Monica, (310) 395-0448. (For information on day care centers, baby-sitters, etc.)

**Advice and Help by Telephone\***:
    "Warm Line," a telephone service at 855-3500 especially for parents of pre-school children.  For use when you want to talk over a problem you are having with your child.  If they can't take your call immediately, someone will call you back.

**If you lose your cool with your child and are concerned about it**:
    Parents Anonymous is a self-help group of parents who have group meetings. To find out about it, call 800-352-0386 toll free.

\* These are examples of the resources available in the Los Angeles area.

# ADJUSTING TO NEW SITUATIONS

*Getting started:*

In an unfamiliar situation, like these groups, it is not unusual for children to feel unsure of themselves and reluctant to leave their parents. When this behavior persists over time in familiar situations it is a problem. Have any of you had problems with your child separating from you? Lets go around the group and ask each of you to share your experience

*Questions:*

- Are there any concerns about children's adjustment to new situations we haven't discussed that you would like to raise?

- If you feel your child has problems adjusting to new situations, what do you think is the cause of these problems?

- Do any of you have suggestions about ways you've handled these problems that you would like to share?

*Summary*

Remember we all feel a bit uncomfortable in new situations. You teach your child how to handle this by what you say and do. Don't push a frightened child into something, he or she can't handle, but try to give them information, support, and courage to become more independent.

*Plans for At-Home Application:*

If your child is fearful in new situations, give them plenty of opportunities to get used to other people and other places. Take them with you to the store, the park, or visits. Encourage them as they try new things independently.

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*Getting Started:*

Young children are a combination of strengths and vulnerabilities. In some areas they are very confident and in other areas they may be timid and unsure. Are there any areas where your child seems to have fears or worries such as fear of the dark? Let's briefly hear from each of you.
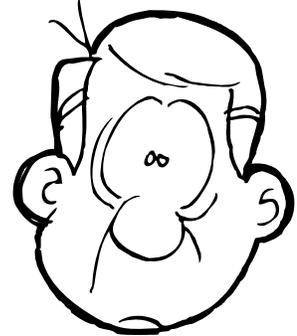
*Questions:*

- Is there anything about fear and worries we haven't discussed that concerns you?

- If your child is fearful or worried why do you think this is happening?

- Do any of you have ideas on how to solve this problem; are there things that you have tried?

You may want to try these steps:

1. Talk to your child about what worries them and try to see their point of view.

2. Rather than reassure them or tell them not to worry, help them find solutions so they feel more in control (like a night light if they are afraid of the dark).

3. Show them you notice when they face their fears so they can see they're making progress.

*Plans for At-Home Applications:*

Watch for indications that your child is worried or fearful. Show them you want to help by trying the three steps in the summary.

**Miedo y Preocupación**

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### *Para Comenzar:*

Los niños jóvenes son una combinación de cualidades y vulnerabilidades. En algunas áreas son muy confidentes y en otras áreas pueden ser tímidos e inseguros. ¿Hay áreas donde su niño parece tener miedos o nervios, como por ejemplo el miedo a la oscuridad? Brevemente oigamos de cada uno de ustedes.
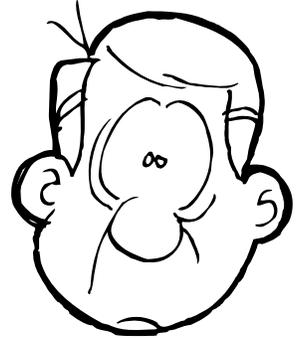
### *Preguntas:*

1. ¿Hay cualquier cosa sobre el miedo o el espanto que no hemos discutido y que les preocupa?

2. ¿Si su niño es temeroso o preocupado, porqué usted piensa que esto está sucediendo?

3. ¿Tienen algunas ideas en cómo solucionar este problema, alguno de ustedes ha intentado algo?

Pueden intentar estos pasos:

1. Hable con su niño sobre que le preocupa e intente ver su punto de vista.

2. En vez de tranquilizarlo o decirle que no se preocupe, ayúdele a encontrar soluciones para que se sienta más en control de la situación (como una luz en la noche si tienen temor a la oscuridad)

3. Demuéstrele que usted nota cuando el/ella le hacen frente al miedo, para que vea que está mejorando.

.
### *Planes para Aplicaciones en el Hogar:*

Este pendiente por señales que sugieran que su niño/a esta preocupado o temeroso. Demuéstrele que usted desea ayudarlo intentando los tres pasos en este resumen.

## ARGUING

There are four good reasons, from a child's point of view, to argue with parents (1) delay, (2) cooling off, (3) wearing the parent down, and (4) power.

**DELAY:** If you are a child who doesn't want to do homework, who would rather watch television than take out the trash, who would prefer polishing your fingernails to cleaning your room, and who can get your parents to argue with you, have you not put off for the entire length of the argument those tasks you've been avoiding?

**COOLING OFF:** Some children will build an argument to such an extent and get so angry that they can't take it any more. They stalk out of the house instead of doing the chores or homework they were supposed to do.

**WEARING THE PARENT DOWN:** Most parents are very familiar with this technique. The child tries repeatedly, and with real tenacity, to keep arguing ... arguing... arguing... until the parent, tired and exhausted, finally says something like, "AN right, all right, you want to live like a pig? Live like a pig . See if I care. " At that point, the child stalks out angrily, chores undone, with a big smile on his face.

**POWER:** One of the central themes of this book has to do with human beings wanting to be in control of their lives That goal is nowhere more evident than in arguments where parents really don't want to argue, yet find themselves trapped **in arguments with their children If parents don't** want to argue with their children, yet find themselves arguing, who is in control, parent or child? From your experience, are there children who argue just for the sake of getting parents under their control for the duration of the argument?

There is a simple solution: **NEVER ARGUE WITH A KID!** You can't win, but a child can. There's a payoff for kids in just getting their parents to argue with them. So, unless you **want** to argue, don't do it. Instead, deflect the argument.

## DEFLECTING ARGUMENTS

Arguments have rules. As soon as you defend yourself, the child-by the rules governing arguments -- has the right to defend himself against your attack; where, in turn, you get to defend yourself from his attack; until one or both of you give up. But you don't need to do that. You don't have to defend yourself against your children's arguments, or try to convince them that you're right and they're wrong.

You are about to get two powerful words that cut through any argument. Coupled with your clearly notated rule, you will find that these words help you to focus on your mandatory behavior rather than on the argument.

The words are "regardless" and "nevertheless" (or their synonyms, "be that as it may," "nonetheless," "that is not the issue"). Only use your argument deflectors once or twice. Then effectively follow through, if a rule is to be completed with "now," and see that the children do as they are told; or if you are merely stating a rule for future behavior, parry their argument with your deflectors and either walk away or send the child away, letting the child have the last word.

From : *Back in Control -How To Get Your Children To Behave,* by Gregory Bodenhamer

**DISCUSIÓN**

Desde el punto de vista de los niños/jóvenes, hay cuatro razones por la cual los niños/as discuten con los padres 1) el perder el tiempo, 2) el calmarse, 3) cansar al padre 4) poder.

PERDER EL TIEMPO: ¿Si usted es un niño/joven que no desea hacer la tarea, que prefiere ver televisión que sacar la basura, pulirse las uñas que limpiar el cuarto, y que pueden guiar a sus padres a tener una discusión, no has logrado perder el tiempo argumentado y discutiendo, tiempo que hubiera sido suficiente para completar todos esos quehaceres?

CALMARCE: Algunos jóvenes logran llevar un argumento hasta un punto de enojo que no se pueden contener y se salen de la casa en vez de hacer los quehaceres o las tareas que estaban supuestos a hacer.

CANSAR AL PADRE: La mayoría de los padres están muy familiarizados con estas técnicas. El niño intenta en varias ocasiones, y con tenacidad verdadera en seguir discutiendo, discutiendo, y discutiendo hasta que el padre cansado y agotado, finalmente dice algo como: esta bien, ¿si quieres vivir como puerco? Vive como puerco. No me importa. En ese momento el joven se sale de la casa enojado, sin hacer lo quehaceres, y con una sonrisa en su cara.

PODER: Uno de los temas centrales de este libro tiene que ver con los seres humanos que desean estar en control de sus vidas. Esta meta no es más evidente que en las discusiones donde los padres realmente no desean discutir, pero se encuentran atrapados **en discusiones con sus niños. Si los padres no desean** discutir pero se encuentran atrapados en tales discusiones, ¿quien está en control, el padre o el niño? Basado en su experiencia, ¿Usted conoce a niños/jóvenes que discuten con el motivo único de tener al padre bajo su control por la duración de la discusión?

Hay una solución simple: ¡Nunca DISCUTA CON UN NIÑO/JOVEN! Usted nunca gana, pero es probable que su niño si. Hay una recompensa para los niños/jóvenes en conseguir que sus padres discutan con ellos. Al menos que usted desee discutir, no lo haga. En lugar, desvíe la discusión.

## DESVIAR LAS DISCUSIONES

Las discusiones tienen reglas. Tan pronto como usted se defienda, el niño/joven-por las reglas que gobiernan las discusiones -- tiene el derecho de defenderse contra su ataque; donde, alternadamente, usted consigue defenderse de su ataque; hasta que uno o ambos se den por vencido. Pero usted no necesita hacer eso. Usted no tiene que defenderse contra las discusiones de sus niños, o intentar convencerlas de que usted tiene la razón y los argumentos de ellas son incorrectos.

Usted está a punto de conseguir dos palabras de gran alcance que penetran a través de cualquier discusión. En conjunto con las reglas claras que usted dicta, usted encontrará que estas palabras le ayudan a centrarse en su comportamiento ejemplar como autoridad en vez de defenderse e involucrarse en la discusión.

Las palabras son "sin embargo" "sin importar" (o sus sinónimos, "no obstante," "sea como sea," "eso no es el punto"). Utilice las palabras para desviar el argumento uno o dos veces. Luego, mantenga su palabra y no se eche para atrás, si la regla tiene que completarse con un "ahora mismo," y nota que el niño/joven esta obedeciendo; si apenas esta dictando una regla para un comportamiento futuro, desvíe el argumento con las palabras de desvío, o dirija a su niño a su cuarto o usted abandone la discusión y deje que el niño tenga la última palabra.

From : *Back in Control -How To Get Your Children To Behave,* by Gregory Bodenhamer

# WAYS TO ENCOURAGE A CHILD

Praise the act, not the actor    Descriptive praise of the act tells the child what specific behavior you like.  A behavior that gets reinforced, tends to be repeated.

Absolutely right
That's regally nice
Thank you very much
Wow!
That's great
That's quite an improvement
Much better
Keep it up
Good job
What neat work
You really out-did yourself today
Congratulations. You only missed
_____.
That's right!  Good for you.
Terrific
I bet Mom and Dad would be
    proud to see the job you did
    on this
Beautiful
I'm proud of the way your worked
    (are working) today
Excellent work
I appreciate your help
Thank you for (sitting down, being
    quiet, getting right to work,
    etc)
Marvelous
Sharp
I appreciate your attention
You caught on very quickly

Fantastic
My goodness, how impressive!
You're on the right track now
It looks like you put a lot of  work into this
That's  clever
Very creative
Very interesting
Good thinking
That's an interesting way of looking at it
Now you've figured it out
That's the right answer
Now you've got the hang of it
Exactly right
Super
Superior work
That's a good point
That's a very good observation
That's an interesting point of view
That certainly is one way of looking at it
Out of sight
Nice going
You make it look easy
That's coming along nicely
I like that. I didn't know it could be done that way outstanding
Uh-huh !
Commendable

# Maneras de Animar a su Hijo

Elogie el acto no el actor. Elogio descriptivo del acto le dice al niño que comportamiento específico a usted le agrada. Un comportmiento que es reforzado o elogiado, tiende a repetirse.

Absolutamente correcto.
Eso es absolutamente agradable.
Muchas gracias.
Wow!
Muy bien.
Muy buena mejora.
Mucho mejor.
Sigue intentando.
Buen trabajo.
Que trabajo tan nitido.
Te mejoraste a ti mismo ahora.
Felicitaciones. Solo perdiste

_____.
Eso es fabuloso Muy bien para ti.
Fabuloso.
Estoy seguro que tu mamá y papá estarán orgulloso de este trabajo.
Estoy orgulloso de como trabajaste ahora.
Excelente trabajo.
Gracias por su ayuda.
Gracias por (sentarse, estar callado, trabajar de inmediato, etc).
Maravilloso.
Fino.
Aprecio su atención.
Aprendió muy rápidamente.

Fantástico.
Dios mío, que impresionante!
Estas en el camino correcto.
Se nota que trabajaste mucho en esto.
Eso es ingenioso.
Muy creativo.
Muy interesante.
Muy bien razonamiento.
Eso es una manera interesante de mirarla.
Ahora ya le entendiste.
Eso es la repuesta correcta
Ahora ya le agarraste la seña
Exactamente correcto
Estupendo.
Trabajo superior.
Eso es un buen punto.
Eso es una observación muy buena.
Eso es un punto de vista interesante.
Ésa es ciertamente una forma de mirarla.
Fuera de serie.
Vas por el buen camino.
Los haces ver fácil.
Eso esta muy bien.
Tengo gusto de eso. No sabía que podría ser hecho de esa manera.
Excepcional
Uh-huh !
Felicitaciones.

# HOW TO HELP YOUR CHILD STUDY

*Your Child's Education Rests on The Mastery of Three Important Skills*
- Reading
- Writing
- Mathematics

*An Effective Learning Process Is Made up of Four Steps*
- Reading
- Understanding
- Remembering
- Reproducing in one's own thoughts and words,
    - either on paper,
    - in classroom recitation, or
    - in the case of mathematics, in solving new problems.

*Time to Study*
Set aside a special time each day for study time.

*Place to Study*
Select a place where there is GOOD LIGHTING.
The study area should be fairly quiet.
'Mere should be NO DISTRACTIONS during study period:
-no radio, no t.v. , no friends visiting

*Achievement Check List For Parents*
- Spend time each day with your child on his/her homework.
- Examine work that is to be turned in.
- Work should be neat and clean.
- There should be no misspelled words.
- Question what is not clear.
- Hear work that is to be memorized.
- Check arithmetic work for neatness and cleanliness only.
- Check to see that all assigned homework has been completed.
- Check work that was returned by teacher for errors.
- Have child redo problems until work is correct.

*The Most Important Weapons for Success Are*
- Praise
- Encouragement
- Enthusiasm
- A good, kind ear.

## CÓMO AYUDAR A SU NIÑO A ESTUDIAR

***La Educación de su Niño Depende en la Maestría de Tres Habilidades Importantes***
- Lectura
- Escritura
- Matemáticas

***El Proceso de aprendizaje Eficaz se Compone de Cuatro Pasos***
- La lectura
- El entendiendo
- El recordar
- Reproducir con sus propios pensamientos y palabras,
     - ya sea escrito,
     - recitando o hablando en la sala de clases
     - en el caso de las matemáticas, en solucionar nuevos problemas.

***Tiempo para Estudiar***
Designe una hora especial cada día para estudiar.

***Lugar para Estudiar***
Seleccione un lugar donde hay BUENO ILUMINACIÓN.
El lugar para estudiar debe ser bastante silencioso.
No debe de haber ninguna DISTRACION durante el periodo del estudio:
     -no radio, no t.v., no visitas de amigos.

***Lista de Logros para los Padres***
- Dedique tiempo con su niño para ayudarles con sus tareas.
- Examine las tareas que deben ser entregadas.
- El trabajo debe estar aseado y limpio.
- No debe haber palabras mal deletreadas.
- Pregunte sobre lo que no esta claro.
- Escuche el trabajo que debe ser memorizado. .
- Revise el trabajo aritmético para saber solamente si esta nítido y limpio.
- Revise si todas las tareas están completas.
- Revise las tareas que fueron devueltas por la maestra para corregirlas.
- haga que el niño haga de nuevo las tareas hasta que el trabajo está correcto.

***Las Herramientas más Importante para el Éxito son:***
- Reconocimiento
- Estímulo
- Entusiasmo
- El saber escuchar con gentileza

**V. Helping Parents to Help Their Children**

*C. Examples of Flyers and Invitations to Parents*
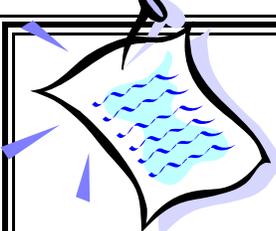
The following examples were
used to invite specific parents
to a discussion group at school. Included
are samples of

(a) invitations sent home with students and RSVPs filled
out by parents and returned by students

(b) letters mailed to parents, and

(c) phone invitations made by volunteers.

```
YOU'RE INVITED

TO A DISCUSSION GROUP AT SCHOOL!
DATE: Thursday, December 14
TIME: 8:30-10:30 a.m.
PLACE: School Name

PLEASE COME
```

Response Card

Please have your child bring this response card back to class so we will know who is coming to the Parent Discussion Group.

_____ I will be coming to the Parent Discussion Group.

_____ I cannot come to the Discussion Group.

Parent's Name: _____

Student's Name: _____

```
ESTAN USTEDES INVITADOS

AL GRUPO DE PLÁTICA EN LA ESCUELA
FECHA: Jueves, 14 de Deciembre
HORA: 8:30-10:30 a.m.
LUGAR: School Name

POR FAVOR VENGAN
```

Tarjeta de Repuesta

Por favor recuerde a su hijo(a) que traiga esta tarjeta de repuesta a la clase para que sepamos quienes van a venir al Grupo de Plática para los Padres.

_____ Voy a venir  al Grupo de Plática para los Padres.

_____ No voy a venir al Grupo de Plática para los Padres.

Nombre de padre: _____

Nombre de estudiante: _____

# Samples of Event Descriptions and Flyers

School Name
Address

**IMPORTANT!**

PARENTING WORKSHOP
For parents of children in
Kindergarten, first and second
grades.

**Date**:  Thursday, May 14, 2008

**Time**:  10:15-11:30am

**Place**:  School Library

Would you like to know more about:
- What to expect of your child?
- How to discipline your child?
- How to communicate with your child?

**Session Sponsored by**:  Mental Health Intervention Program

**Session Leaders**:        Social Worker
                Kindergarten Coordinator

A SPANISH TRANSLATOR WILL BE PRESENT.

Principal

---------------------------------------Please complete and return-------------------------------------------
Teacher:
_____ I will attend the workshop on Thursday, May 14, 2008.
_____ I am unable to attend the workshop.

| Student's name | Room # | Parent's Signature |

Emelita Street School
Address

IMPORTANTE!

Para los padres de niños en
Kindergarten, Primer y Segundo Grados

**Día:** Jueves, 14 de mayo, 2008
**Hora:** 10:15-11:30am
**Lugar:** La biblióteca de
Emelita St. School

Quisiara Ud. saber más acerca de:
Qué esperar de su hijo/hija?
Cómo disciplina a su hijo/hija?
Cómo comunicar con su hijo/hija?
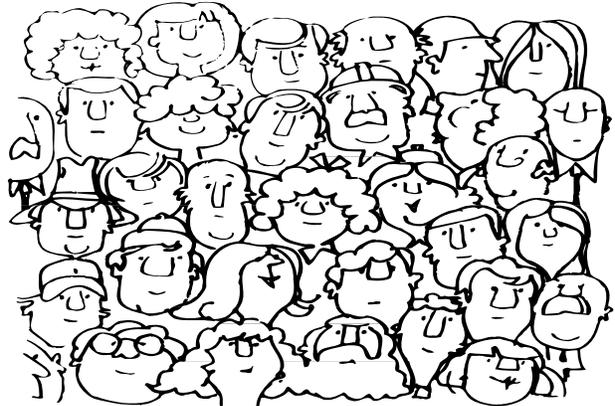
**Sesión apoyada por:** Mental Health Intervetion Program
**Directora de la sesión:** Psychiatric Social Worker
Kindergarten Coordinator

TRACDUCTO DE ESPAÑOL ESTARÁ AQUÍ

**************************Por Favor Llene Y Devuelvalo***************************
Maestra:
_____ Asistiré al seminario jueves el 14 de mayo, 2008
_____ No puede asistir al seminario

_____        _____        _____
Nombre del niño                     Número de salón                    Firma del Padre

130

DO YOU HAVE A FEW HOURS TO HELP
KINDERGARTEN & FIRST GRADERS
GET OFF TO A GOOD START?

**Report Card** | A+
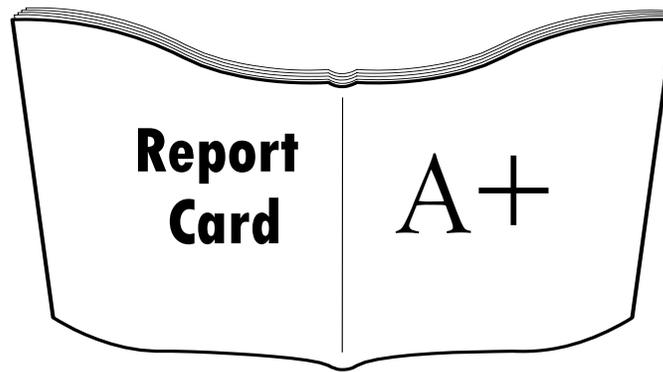
Under supervision, you can volunteer in the morning or afternoon to work with students who need a little extra help, support, and direction.

IF YOU ARE INTERESTED
CALL

_____

AT _____

FOR MORE INFORMATION.

## PARIENTES – AYUDEN

¿TIENE USTED UN PAR HORAS PARA AYUDAR
A NINOS DE KINDERGARTEN Y PRIMARIA
EMPEZAR CON UN BUEN COMIENZO?

**Report Card** | A+
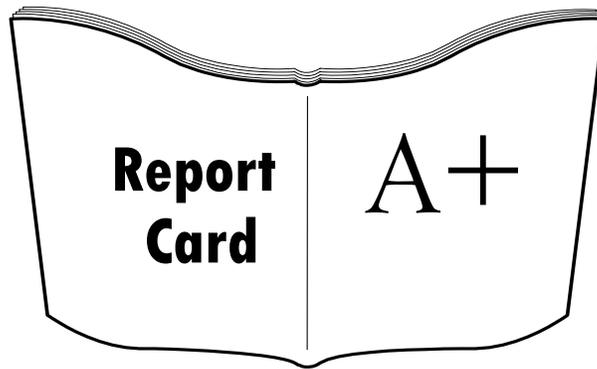
Con supervision, usted puede voluntar por la manana o de la tarde y trabajar
con estudiantes que necesitan extra ayuda, apoyo, y direccion.

SI USTED ESTA INTERESADO
LLAME A

_____

AL _____

PARA MAS INFORMACION.

School Name
Address

May 12, 2008

IMPORTANT!
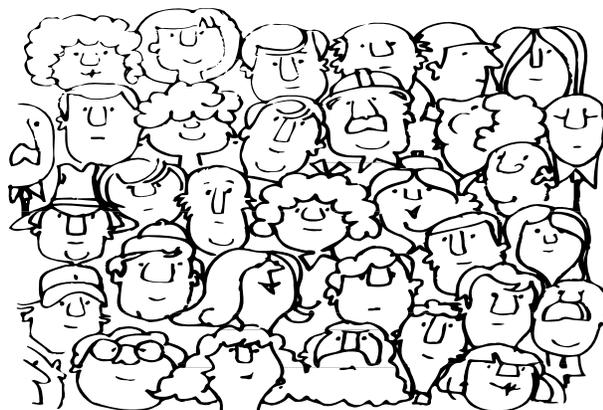
Dear Kindergarten, First and Second Grade Parents:

We hope that you are planning to attend the school's Parenting Skills Workshop on

Thursday, May 14, 2008.  Come to the school library from 10:15-11:30 am.  The meeting will

be conducted by the Los Angeles City School Mental Health Staff.  We look forward to seeing

YOU there.

Program Representative


Queridos Parientes,

La conferencia empieza a las 10:15 -11:30 am en la biblioteca de la escuela. Esa

conferencia sera dirigida de los empleados del departamento de la salud mental, Los Angeles.

Esperamos ver ustedes ahi.

Representante del programa

Dear Mr. / Mrs. _____, (Personalize)

We're having a Parent Discussion Group on Thursday, December 14th from 8:30-10:00 a.m. at _____'s school. We hope you can come!

The purpose of the group is to talk about how parents can
- communicate better with their children
- be loving even when discipline is necessary
- improve their children's self-esteem.

These discussions are very informal. Parents who have attended such groups in the past have really enjoyed the chance to talk with each other and learn how to be better parents. I look forward to seeing you there.

Querido(a) Senor / Senora _____,

Jueves, 14 de Deciembre entre las 8:30 - 10:00 de la manana, en la escuala de _____ vamos a tener un grupo para los padres. Esperamos que puedan venir!

El proposito de el grupo es para hablar sobre que pueden hacer los padres para:
- communicarse mejor con sus hijos
- demostrarles amor aunque se les tenga que disciplinar
- ensenarles como tener confianza en si mismos

Este grupo es muy informal. Los padre que han participado en grupos similares en el pasado han disfrutado de la oportunidad discutir a un al otro como ser mejores padres.

Esperamos verlos!

_____
Group Discussion Leaders / Lider del Grupo de Platica

# *PHONE NOTIFICATION*
## *OF THE PARENT DISCUSSION GROUP MEETING*

*Before you call, write down the appropriate information in the blanks. If you get an answering machine, hang up. Remember to speak with enthusiasm and express appreciation of their time.*

Student: _____ School _____

*After you call check appropriate lines below*

_____ Talked with the mother, father, or guardian of child
_____ Could not contact the mother, father or guardian by the tenth try.
_____ No answer (answering machine)

Hello my name is _____, and I'm calling with a reminder about
a Parent Discussion Group meeting to be held at
(school name: _____) school.
Is this (Mr./Mrs.) _____?
(If not) May I speak to either the mother or father of _____?

I wanted to let you know that your child's school is having a parent discussion
group meeting. The purpose of the group is to talk about how parents can
communicate better with their children, be loving even when discipline is
necessary, and improve their children's self-esteem. It will be meeting on:
_____ at _____.

Do you think you or your spouse will be attending?
 Y   N _____

Well, that is all I was calling about. Thank you for your time, and have a good day.

# NOTOFICATION POR TELEFONO
# DE LA JUNTA DEL GRUPO DE PLATICA DE LOS PADRES

*Antes de llamar, escriba la information apropriada en los espacios. Si le contesta una grabadora, cuelgue. Recuerde, habla con entusioamo y hagale saber su agradecimiento por el tiempo que le estan brindando.*

Estudiante: _____ Escuela: _____

Despues de la conversacion, marque una de las lineas apropriadas.
_____ Hable con la madre, el padre, o el encargado del nino
_____ No pude hablar con la madre, el padre, o el encargado del nino en 10 ententos.
_____ No obtuve respuesta (grabadora)

Hola, mi nombre es _____. Estoy llamando para hacerloes un recordatorio de la unta del Grupo de Platica para los Padres en la escuela (nombre de la escueala: _____).
Es usted el senor / la senora _____?
(Si no) Puedo hablar con el padre o la madre de (nombre del estudiante:) _____.

Quiero informale que la escuela de su hijo va a tener una junta del Grupo de Platica para los Padres. El proposito de este grupo es para discutir por ejemplo, como pueden los padres comunicarse mejor con sus hijos, demostrar amor aunque se les necesitan disciplinar, y ensenar en los hijo como tener confianza en si mismos.

Este grupo se va reunir en (fecha: _____) en (lugar: _____).
Puede usted or su esposa/esposo asistir?
Si    No            _____


Gracias por tiempo, esta es todo lo que queria comunicar. Buenos dias.

**V. Helping Parents to Help Their Children**

## *D. Examples of Feedback Materials*

> » Parent Information Sheets used to gather demographic descriptors (English & Spanish versions)
>
> » Log Record and Observation Notes of Daily Activity - used to keep track of activity – includes qualitative observations and tallies of activity
>
> » Parent Involvement at School Rating Scale filled out by school staff who have regular contacts with parents
>
> » Parent Ratings of Discussion Group – the example provided is the scale given to parents at the conclusion of each discussion group (English & Spanish versions)
>
> » Family Needs Assessment – questionnaire designed to be mailed to parents (English & Spanish versions)
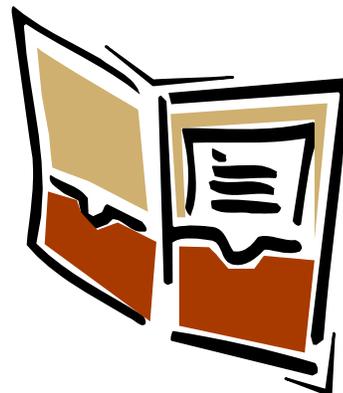
# Parent Information Sheet

Your name: _____ Date: _____

Student's name: _____Child's grade   (  )K   (  )1 (  )2  (  )3

School: _____ Your age: _____

Your relationship to student: (  ) mother   (  ) father  (  ) other (specify) _____

Your race and/or ethnic origin:

(  ) White (not of Hispanic origin)          (  ) Black (not of Hispanic origin)

(  ) Hispanic                                          (  ) Asian / Pacific Islander

(  ) American Indian / Alaskan native      (  ) Filipino

(  ) Other _____

Has your child had any of the following early childhood experiences:

(  ) School district Pre-kindergarten program

(  ) private pre-school

(  ) Headstart

(  ) Day-care center

Are there other children living in your household?  (  ) Yes   (  ) No

If yes, ages of boys _____

ages of girls _____

Are there other adults in your household?

(  ) No

(  ) Husband / Wife

(  ) Grandparents

(  ) Other (specify) _____

Indicate the group that best fits your socioeconomic background and status.

(  )     Major business or professional (e.g., executive, architect, lawyer, scientist, etc.)

(  )     Technical, small business (e.g. managerial, technical, secretarial, etc.)

(  )     Crafts, clerical, sales (e.g., cashier, bank teller, clerical worker, baker, carpenter, postal worker, etc.)

(  )     Semi-skilled work (e.g., driver, delivery, file clerk, guard, housekeeper, machine operator, etc.)

(  )     Unskilled work (e.g., laborer, busboy, gardener, usher, food server, etc.)

# Information Sobre Padres

Su nombre _____ Fecha _____

Nombre del estudiante _____ Grado de hijo(a)   ( )K   ( )1 ( )2   ( )3

Escuela _____ Su edad _____

Relacion con estudiante: ( ) Madre ( )Padre ( ) Otro (indique) _____


Tuvo su hijo(a) algunas de las siguiente experiencias durante su ninez?

( )    Programa de pre-kinder del distrito escolar

( )    Pre-kinder en escuala privada

( )    Headstart

( )    Centro de cuidad de ninez


Hay otros nino(s) viviendo en su hogar?  ( )Si   ( )No

edad de ninos _____

edad de ninas _____


Viven otros adultos en su hogar?

( )No   ( )Esposo(a)     ( ) Abuelos    ( )Otros (indique) _____


Indique el grupo de mejor describe su estado socioeconomico.

( )    Negocio grande o professional (por ejemplo, arquitecto, abogado, etc...)

( )    Technico, Negocio pequeno (por ejemplo supervisor, technico, secretaria, etc...)

( )    Ventas, Oficina (por ejemplo, cajera, cartero, panadero, carpintero, etc...)

( )    Semi-oficio (por ejemplo, operador de maquinas, guardia, manejador, etc...)

( ) Labor (por ejemplo, jardinero, mesera, mensajero, etc...)

# Log Record and Observation Notes

Daily Log For Staff

Name_____

| Date | Location | Recruit | Or. | Trng. | Pla. | Sprv. | Consu. | Par. | Eval. | Other |
|------|----------|---------|-----|-------|------|-------|--------|------|-------|-------|
|      |          |         |     |       |      |       |        |      |       |       |
|      |          |         |     |       |      |       |        |      |       |       |
|      |          |         |     |       |      |       |        |      |       |       |
|      |          |         |     |       |      |       |        |      |       |       |
|      |          |         |     |       |      |       |        |      |       |       |
|      |          |         |     |       |      |       |        |      |       |       |
|      |          |         |     |       |      |       |        |      |       |       |
|      |          |         |     |       |      |       |        |      |       |       |
|      |          |         |     |       |      |       |        |      |       |       |
|      |          |         |     |       |      |       |        |      |       |       |
|      |          |         |     |       |      |       |        |      |       |       |
|      |          |         |     |       |      |       |        |      |       |       |
|      |          |         |     |       |      |       |        |      |       |       |
|      |          |         |     |       |      |       |        |      |       |       |
|      |          |         |     |       |      |       |        |      |       |       |
|      |          |         |     |       |      |       |        |      |       |       |

Instructions:  *Date* refers to when the activity or event occured
   *Location* refers to where the activity or event occured.
   *Recruit* refers efforts to get volunteers, including parents
   *Or.* refers to orientation to new volunteers; explaining the program
   *Trng*. refers to training new volunteers in how to get started
   *Pla*. refers to placement of volunteers in the classroom
   *Consu*. refers to consultation with teachers about a child
   *Par*. refers to a parent activity, such as a parent group
   *Eval*. refers to completeing the evaluation materials
   *Other* lists anything else, such as meetings

# *Observation Notes*

Program staff can make regular notes about activity related to each component. These observations can give a rich profile of the activity and provide a qualitative perspective for judging the degree to which intended program antecedents, transactions, and outcomes actually occur.

(If staff find it difficult to make regular observation notes on their own, periodic interviews can be used to gather the requisite data.)

To provide structure, respondents can be asked (minimally) to answer the following questions.

1. To what degree did you find that needed antecedent conditions actually were present? (Indicate any interfering factors.)

2. To what degree and how well did intended procedures actually take place?(Indicate any interfering factors.)

3. To what degree and how well were intended outcomes achieved?(Indicate any interfering factors.)

## Parent Involvement Rating I &II

Please indicate the degree of parental contact specifically with you and your classroom in black.

Please indicate the <u>OVERALL</u> degree of parental contact the school in red.

------------------------------------------------------------------------------

## Parent Involvement III

Do these contacts seem to be leaading to a positive partnership with the school?

------------------------------------------------------------------------------

Ethnicity*

| | | never | once a month | once a week | more than once a week | | definiely | looks promising | doesn't look promising | definitely not |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| ___ | Mother | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| ___ | Father | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | | | | | |
| ___ | Mother | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| ___ | Father | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | | | | | |
| ___ | Mother | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| ___ | Father | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | | | | | |
| ___ | Mother | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| ___ | Father | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | | | | | |
| ___ | Mother | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| ___ | Father | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | | | | | |
| ___ | Mother | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| ___ | Father | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | | | | | |
| ___ | Mother | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| ___ | Father | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | | | | | |

Contact Person(s): _____    Grade:   K        1

* Ethnicity: A=Asians  B=Black  C=Caucasion  H=Hispanic  O=Other                     Date: ____

# Evaluation of Parent Group

School_____ Today's Date_____


We are happy that you attended the parent group and would like to know your reactions. Please give us your opinions. We will use them to improve future groups. Thank you.


1. How worthwhile do you feel it was to attend the parent group meeting?

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| not at all | not much | only a little | more than a little | quite a bit | very much |

2. How much did the meeting help you improve your understanding of problems your child is having?

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| not at all | not much | only a little | more than a little | quite a bit | very much |

3. How much did coming to the parent meeting increase your motivation to try to find ways to solve problems your child has?

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| not at all | not much | only a little | more than a little | quite a bit | very much |

4. If we were to offer more group meetings for parents, how much would you like to attend?

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| not at all | not much | only a little | more than a little | quite a bit | very much |

5. Was there anything you found especially helpful in the group meetings?
(Such as handouts; presentations; hearing from other parents; other things?)




6. Was there anything you wanted from the group meetings that you didn't get? If so, what was it?


Your age _____ Male_____ or Female_____

Your race and/or Ethnic Origin: _____

**Evalacion del Grupo de Padres**

Escuela de nino/a_____ Fecha _____

Nos da mucho gusto que esten aqui con nosotros en esta junta para ustedes los padres, y queremos saber sus reacciones. Por favor denos sus opiniones. Las queremos usar para mejorar nuestras juntas del futuro.   Muchisimas Gracias.

1. Como valorizan ustedes el haber participado en esta junta de padres?

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| nada | no mucho | solo un poco | mas que un poco | bastante | muchisimo |

2. Que tanto les ayudaron estas juntas para mejorar el entendimiento de los problemas que tienan sus hijos?

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| nada | no mucho | solo un poco | mas que un poco | bastante | muchisimo |

3. Como aumento su motivacion el haber venido a esta junta para encontrar mejores manera para resolver los problemas que sus hijos tengan?

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| nada | no mucho | solo un poco | mas que un poco | bastante | muchisimo |

4. Si nosotros ofrecieramos mas juntas para los padres, cuanto le gustaria a usted venir?

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| nada | no mucho | solo un poco | mas que un poco | bastante | muchisimo |

5. Hubo algo mas especial que le ayudo en estas juntas?
(Como las papeles; la presentacions; escuchar a lot otros padres; o alguna otra cosa?)

6. Habla alguna otra cosa que usted le hubiera gustado recibir? Y que no recibio? Nos quiere decir por favor?

Su edad_____ Masculino_____ o Femenino_____

Usted es:        Mexicano-americano/chicano _____

                Latino (Central America, Sur America, Cubano, Espanol, etc) _____

                Otro (Que pais/grupo?_____)

# V. Helping Parents to Help Their Children

## E. Example of Addressing Diversity

Clearly, a fundamental need is to focus on diversity. The examples above and the following article are intended to underscore that need, even though only one segment of the population is specifically highlighted in this packet.

### *Increasing the School Involvement of Hispanic Parents* (1992).
by *Morton Inger*.    ERIC/CUE Digest Number 80.  ED350380

The importance of family structure and support for extended families remains strong among Hispanics in the U.S. despite news reports about the decline of the traditional family in general. At home, Hispanic children are usually nurtured with great care by a large number of relatives. Often, however, family members don't extend their caregiving role into their children's schools; they are reluctant to become involved in either their children's education or in school activities. In the case of poor Hispanic parents, interactions with school range from low to nonexistent (Nicolau & Ramos, 1990).

There is considerable evidence that parent involvement leads to improved student achievement, better school attendance, and reduced dropout rates, and that these improvements occur regardless of the economic, racial, or cultural background of the family (Flaxman & Inger, 1991). Thus, given that 40 percent of Hispanic children are living in poverty, that Hispanics are the most under-educated major segment of the U.S. population, and that many Hispanic children enter kindergarten seriously lacking in language development and facility, regardless of whether they are bilingual, speak only English, or speak only Spanish, the need to increase the involvement of Hispanic parents in their children's schools is crucial.

SCHOOLS AND HISPANICS: SEPARATED BY SOCIAL BARRIERS

In Hispanics' countries of origin, the roles of parents and schools were sharply divided. Many low-income Hispanic parents view the U.S. school system as "a bureaucracy governed by educated non-Hispanics whom they have no right to question" (Nicolau & Ramos, 1990, p. 13). Many school administrators and teachers misread the reserve, the non-confrontational manners, and the non-involvement of Hispanic parents to mean that they are uncaring about their children's education--and this misperception has led to a cycle of mutual mistrust and suspicion between poor Hispanic parents and school personnel.

Many schools have unconsciously erected barriers to Hispanic parents, adopting a paternalistic or condescending attitude toward them. In some cases, parent-teacher organizations meet during working hours, and material sent home is in English only. Few teachers or administrators are offered guidance or training to help them understand and reach out to Hispanic parents, and school personnel rarely speak Spanish. Less than three percent of the nation's elementary school teachers, less than two percent of secondary teachers, and only two percent of other school personnel are Hispanic (Orum & Navarette, 1990).

THE HISPANIC FAMILY: AN UNTAPPED RESOURCE

One step that schools can take is to understand and tap into an important and underutilized source of strength--the Hispanic extended family. Aunts, uncles, grandparents, cousins, godparents, and even friends all play a role in reinforcing family values and rearing children. This is a resource that schools can and should draw on.

With budget cuts affecting virtually every school district in the country, public schools have turned to parents for help. Parents keep school libraries open, raise funds for computers and playground equipment, and, at some schools, even pay out of their own pockets to continue before- school and after-school enrichment

programs. Although worthwhile, these efforts raise troubling questions: " What happens to schools in which parents do not have enough money to compensate for the system's failings?" (Chira, 1992). And what happens at schools where Hispanic parents are not involved and therefore are not available to supplement the school's staff? Does this put their children at an increased competitive disadvantage? Budget crises thus reinforce the urgency for schools to break down the barriers between them and Hispanic families.

Through expanded outreach efforts, a budget crisis could be an opportunity to bring Hispanic family members into the school. Even if the parents are working and cannot volunteer their time, other available family members could serve as a pool of potential volunteers. If the schools need their help, and if this need is made clear, Hispanic family members are more likely to feel welcome, useful, and respected, and this participation could lead to a fuller involvement with the school.

But the need for schools to work with what Delgado (1992) calls the "natural support systems" of Hispanics--e.g., the extended family, neighborhood mutual-help groups, community based organizations--goes beyond the short-term exigencies of a budget crisis. By working with these natural support systems and not insisting on meeting only with the nuclear family, schools can draw poor Hispanic families into the system.

REMOVING THE BARRIERS

Some educators, community groups, and government agencies are working to develop ways to encourage greater participation by low-income, non- English-speaking parents. Some school districts now employ a range of special training programs to help parents build self-esteem, improve their communication skills, and conduct activities that will improve their children's study habits. Within the U.S. Department of Education's Office of Elementary and Secondary Education (OESE), Project Even Start provides assistance to instructional programs that combine adult literacy outreach with training to enable parents to support the educational growth of their children.

In the private sphere, many Hispanic organizations have undertaken a variety of projects to improve the relationship between schools and poor Hispanic families. For example, the Hispanic Policy Development Project (HPDP) conducted a nationwide grant program to promote and test strategies to increase Hispanic parental involvement in the schooling of their children. And the National Council of La Raza (NCLR) runs a series of demonstration projects, called Project EXCEL, that combine tutoring and enrichment programs for Hispanic children with training seminars for parents.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The following recommendations are based on what has been learned from the efforts of educators and community groups to improve Hispanic parent involvement.

Programs that increase and retain the involvement of Hispanic parents follow a simple, basic rule: they make it easy for parents to participate. In Detroit's Effective Parenting Skills Program, for example, programs and materials are bilingual, baby-sitting is provided, there are no fees, and times and locations of meetings are arranged for the convenience of the parents (Linn, 1990, cited in Flaxman & Inger, 1991). Other programs provide interpreters and transportation.

Outreach efforts require extra staff. They take considerable time and cannot be handled by a regular staff person with an already full job description. Also, successful outreach is organized by people who have volunteered, not by people who have been assigned to the job.

Hispanic parents need to be allowed to become involved with the school community at their own pace. As the Hispanic Policy Development Project (HPDP) learned, "All the schools that felt that poor Hispanic parents should begin their involvement by joining the existing parents' organizations failed" (Nicolau & Ramos, 1990, p. 18). Before they join existing parent organizations, Hispanic parents want to acquire the skills and the confidence to contribute as equals.

The hardest part of building a partnership with low-income Hispanic parents is getting parents to the first meeting. HPDP found that impersonal efforts--letters, flyers, announcements at church services or on local radio or TV--were largely ineffective, even when these efforts were in Spanish. The only successful approach is personal: face-to-face conversations with parents in their primary language in their homes.

Home visits not only personalize the invitations but help school staff to understand and deal with parents' concerns. The schools learn, for example, which families need baby-sitting or transportation; and the parents learn whether they can trust the school staff or otherwise allay their fears about attending.

Since many low-income Hispanics feel uncomfortable in schools, successful projects hold the first meetings outside of the school, preferably at sites that are familiar to the parents. Successful first meetings are primarilysocial events; unsuccessful ones are formal events at school, with information aimed "at" the parents.

To retain the involvement of low-income Hispanic parents, every meeting has to respond to some needs or concerns of the parents. Programs that consult with parents regarding agendas and meeting formats and begin with the parents' agenda eventually cover issues that the school considers vital; those that stick exclusively to the school's agenda lose the parents.

Based on what it learned from its 42 School/Parent projects, HPDP concluded that overcoming the barriers between schools and Hispanic parents does not require large amounts of money; it does require personal outreach, non-judgmental communication, and respect for parents' feelings. HPDP found that although Hispanic school personnel can facilitate the process, non- Hispanics can also be effective. In fact, HPDP reported that the two most successful and innovative programs were led by a Chinese principal and an Anglo principal. Both, however, spoke Spanish.

## RESOURCES

ASPIRA 1112 16th St., NW, Suite 340 Washington, DC 20036, www.aspira.org

Hispanic Policy Development Project 250 Park Ave. South, Suite 5000A New York, NY 10003

Mexican American Legal Defense Fund 634 South Spring St., 11th Floor Los Angeles, CA 90014, www.maldef.org

National Council of La Raza 810 First St., NE, Suite 300 Washington, DC 20002-4205, 202-289-1380

National Puerto Rican Coalition 1700 K Street, Suite 500, NW Washington, DC 20006, 202-223-3915, 429-2223Fax

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http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/qf/homework.htm

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