

# You Know Parent Involvement is Important- But do you know why?

Martha Velasco  
DDIV EHS Program Coordinator  
UHSA Early Childhood Conference  
January 22, 2010

# The Research behind the claim

Kathy Barclay – Western Illinois University  
Children and Families – The magazine of the  
National Head Start Association  
Spring 2005

# Why the long-standing emphasis on parental involvement?

- Involving parents in the education of their children results in increased student performance at all grade levels
- Parent Involvement in school leads to more positive attitudes about school for both children and parents

# Benefits for children

*A New wave of Evidence: The Impact of School, Family, and Community Connections on Student Achievement*, Anne T. Henderson and Karen L. Mapp

- Higher academic achievement when parents participated in programs and activities to help them promote learning at home and who provided consistent at-home support

*Parent Involvement in Early Intervention for Disadvantaged Children: Does it Matter?* Wendy T. Miedel and Arthur J. Reynolds

- Children whose parents took part in a greater number of parent involvement activities tended to demonstrate higher reading scores, spend less time in special education and successfully progress without retention

Gail Jordan, Catherine Snow, and Michelle Porche *studied the effects of Project EASE (Early Access to Success in Education)*

- Significant gains on language scores

# more...Benefits for Children

Prentice Starkey and Alice Klein *found in two studies of a program to develop math skills in Head Start children*

- Children developed greater knowledge and skills in math

*A New Generation of Evidence: The Family is Critical to Student Achievement*

Anne T. Henderson and Nancy Berla

- Found that the greatest predictor of student achievement is family involvement in which the family...
  1. Creates a home environment that encourages learning.
  2. Expresses high expectations for their child's achievement and future.
  3. Becomes involved in their child's education at school and the community.

# The Research is clear

Families, regardless of income level, can make a real difference in their child's academic achievement and success in life by promoting learning at home, having high expectations for their children, and participating in school and community activities

# Involving all Families

- Students of all backgrounds benefit from the involvement of their parents

*Joyce L. Epstein and Diane Scott-Jones*

- Parent's education was not significantly correlated with parent involvement
- Educator's positive attitudes toward parent involvement are significantly correlated with more success in working with families dealing with higher risk issues
- These teachers believe they share similar beliefs with parents about being involved in their children's education and, therefore, offer more types of activities to involve all families and make more contacts with parents
- Research findings point to the necessity for teachers and parents to come to know one another and to develop shared goals and beliefs about the role each plays in the education of children
- Teachers who worked hard to provide all parents with ideas for home-learning and who communicated frequently with all parents were recognized by parents as being better teachers

# Home Visiting

Research has shown that benefits of these programs include:

- Positive changes in the interactions of parents with their children
- Positive adaptations to the home environments
- Positive outcomes in cognitive, behavioral, and motor development of the children served

*Building School Readiness Through Home Visitation*, by Deanna S. Gomby

- The most effective programs are those that are linked with other services, especially those involving direct services to children
- Home Visiting in communities where parents are generally reluctant or unable to come to school or participate in school activities serve to foster cooperation and forge bonds between teachers and parents
- Traveling to different homes also gives teachers the opportunity to discover connections that can bridge home and school

# Home Visiting

*The Teacher's Playing at My House This Week!* Marion Fox-Barnett and Tamar Meyer

- Noted that parents find it easier to come to school if they have already shared with the teacher a particular interest or ability

Researchers have identified some common characteristics of successful early childhood home-visitation programs

- The provision of multiple services
- Use of Professionals
- Program duration

# Types of Parent Involvement

*developed by Joyce L. Epstein and her colleagues at John Hopkins University*

## Framework for Parent Involvement

- Parenting
- Communicating
- Volunteering
- Learning at Home
- Decision making
- Collaborating with the community

# Legislation regarding Parent Involvement

*2004 No Child Left Behind – Parental Involvement, the Department of Education cites the following statutory definition of parental involvement” ...the participation of parents in regular, two-way, and meaningful communication involving student academic learning and other school activities, including ensuring-*

- That parents play an integral role in assisting their child’s learning
- That parents are encouraged to be actively involved in their child’s education at school
- That parents are full partners in their child’s education and are included, as appropriate, in decision-making and on advisory committees to assist in the education of their child
- That other activities are carried out

# Legislation

## 2007 Head Start Act -Sec. 642

(b) Family and Community Involvement; Family Services – To be so designated, a Head Start Agency shall, at a minimum, do all the following to involve and serve families and communities:

(1) Provide for the regular and direct participation of parents and community residents in the implementation of the Head Start program, including decisions that influence the character of such program

(2) Seek the involvement of parents, community residents, and local business in the design and implementation of the program

(3) Establish effective procedures—

(A) to facilitate and seek the involvement of parents of participating children in activities designed to help such parents become full partners in the education of their children; and

# Legislation

(B) to afford such parents the opportunity to participate in the development and overall conduct of the program at the local level

(13) Promote continued involvement of the parents (including foster parents, grandparents, and kinship caregivers, as appropriate) of children that participate in Head Start programs in the education of their children upon transition of their children to school, by working with the local education agency—

(B) to take other actions, as appropriate and feasible, to support the active involvement of the parents with schools, school personnel, and school-related organizations

# In Summary

- Parents can have a positive effect in the education of their children
- Teachers who make a point of using parent involvement strategies are more likely to reach parents regarded by other teachers as “hard-to-reach”
- Effective family involvement programs:
  1. Open the lines of communication between home and school
  2. Support parents in their attempts to help their children in home learning activities
  3. Recognize the importance of building strong partnerships

# Resources

- [ECLKC.ohs.acf.hhs.gov](http://ECLKC.ohs.acf.hhs.gov)- The Early Childhood Early Learning & Learning and Knowledge Center
- *Building Their Futures*, prepared by the Commissioner's Office of Research and Evaluation and the Head Start Bureau, Administration of Children, Youth , and Families, Department of Health and Human Services (2001)
- "Head Start: A Pioneer in Family Support" by E.F.Zigler and J.Freedman, published in America's Family Support Programs (Yale University Press, 1987)