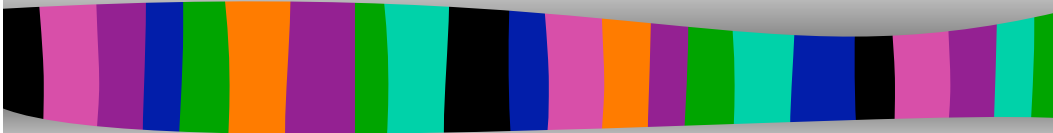


Engaging all Families

~

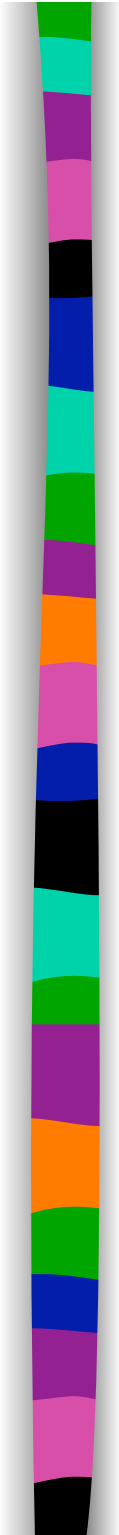
Assessing the Culture  
of Your Organization



CAEYC

Durango, Colorado

November 1, 2014

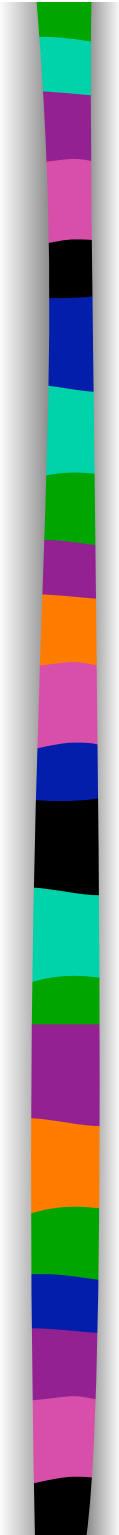


# What does Parent Engagement mean for you and your organization?

How do you know you have been successful as...

■ An organization

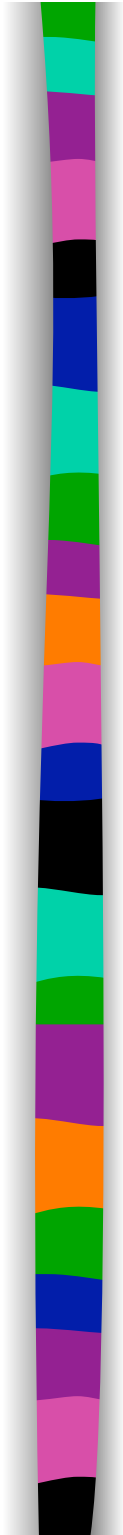
■ With a family



## Did you know that Family Involvement is...

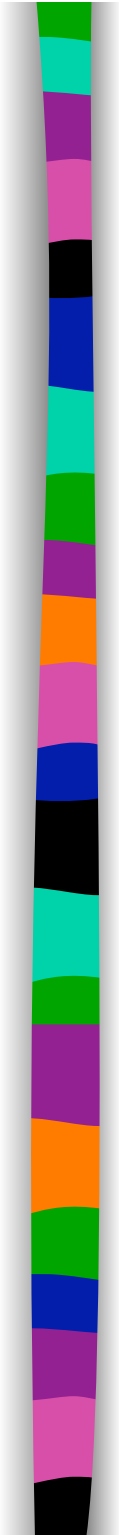


Any activity that parents do  
with and on behalf of the  
education of their children in  
the home and school  
environments.



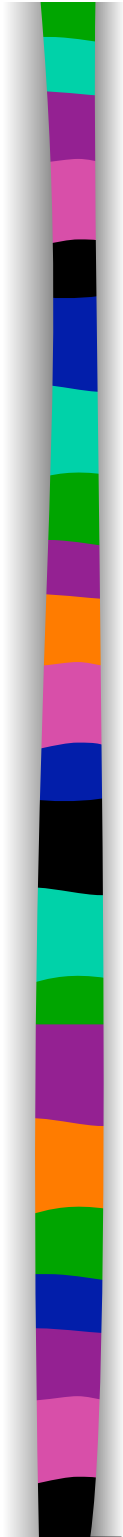
## Summary of the Research

- Research has shown that there is a positive correlation between parental involvement and student achievement. In fact, “the family makes critical contributions” to their child’s academic success (Henderson & Berla, 1994, p.14).
- The home environment is the “hidden curriculum” that provides a foundation for children’s readiness to learn and academic success (Walberg, 1984).



## Summary of the Research

- Family involvement minimizes the disconnection between the home and school environments (Zigler & Berman, 1983).
- The relationship between family involvement and academic success holds across families of all economic, ethnic, and educational backgrounds (Henderson & Mapp, 2002).
- Family involvement benefits parents too. They feel more capable as a parent and as an advocate for their child (Davies, 1993).



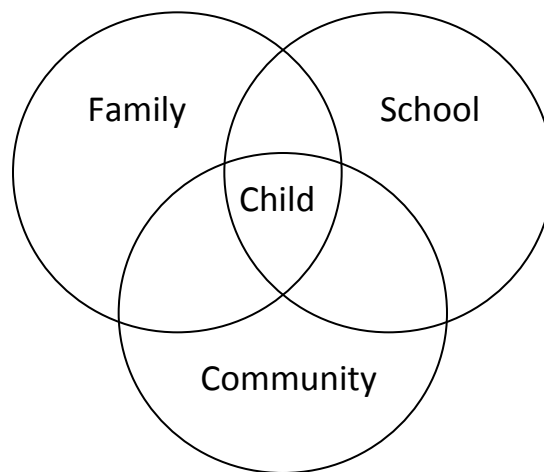
## Current Theories and Themes

- Epstein's Overlapping spheres of Influence
- Epstein's Framework of Six Types of Parental Involvement



## Epstein's Overlapping Spheres of Influence

**When the student, family, and school spheres operate in conjunction with one another, student attitude and achievement improve (Becker & Epstein, 1982).**





# Epstein's Framework of Six Types of Parental Involvement

## **1. Parenting and basic obligations of the family**

- Provide for child's health and safety
- Utilize positive parenting practices
- Provide home conditions that support educational growth

## **2. Communication and basic obligations of the school**

- Responsibility to communicate with families while respecting parental language and literacy issues regarding:
  - School programming
  - Child progress
  - Family Concerns

## **3. Volunteering and parental involvement in the school**

- Efforts are made by the school to match parent interests and schedules to needs of students, teachers, and administrators
- Parents assist in the classroom setting or school building





## Epstein's Framework of Six Types of Parental Involvement cont.

### **4. Family involvement in learning activities in the home**

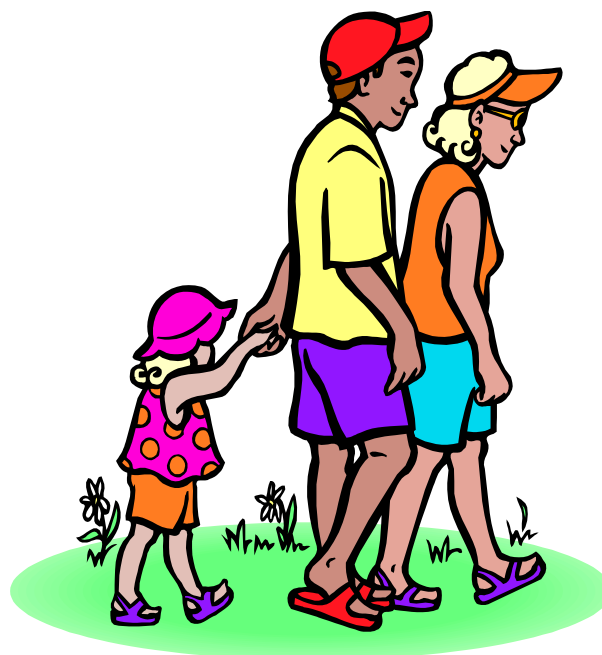
- Teacher guidance and support
- Parents assist children with learning activities such as:
  - Homework
  - Other activity that is an extension of classroom based learning

### **5. Family involvement in decision making at school**

- School community level
- Parent Teacher Organization

### **6. Community involvement and collaboration**

# Family Perspective





# Benefits of Family Engagement

## **Academic:**

- Strong predictor of academic achievement
- Higher reading and test scores, lower chance of grade retention
- Increase in child motivation to learn
- Protective factor in counteracting risk conditions associated with underachievement (Miedel & Reynolds, 1999).

## **School-Home Communication**

- Minimizes the disconnection between school and home
- Parents have a clearer understanding of what is expected at school
- Higher parental involvement is equated with increase in teacher outreach

## **Parental Efficacy**

- Increase in parental understanding and confidence in how they can influence and enhance learning at home (Davies, 1993).



# Challenges of Family Engagement

## **Parental history**

- Unsuccessful education as a child
- Undiagnosed disability
- Unresponsive school system

## **Educator is viewed as the primary expert in their child's learning**

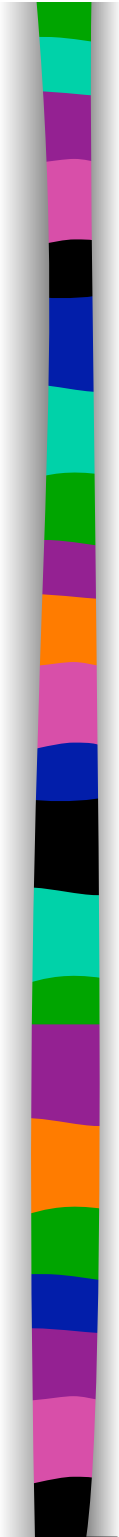
## **Cultural/language considerations**

- Uncertainty of role, do not want to interfere
- Unavailability of information in a family's first language

## **Logistical**

- Family time
- Work schedule
- Child care and transportation issues

# Educational Perspective





# Benefits of Family Engagement

## **Staff**

- More effective teachers
- Higher job performance
- Better job satisfaction
- Teachers report more positive acknowledgement for their work
- Increase in student academic achievement

## **School to Home Connection**

- Creates a climate of good will and trust
- Increase in effective communication
- Parents more responsive to teacher feedback



# Challenges of Family Engagement

## **Staff**

- Disagreement about the family role in the educational setting
- Claim interest but give family limited means to participate
- Time
- 

## **School to Home Connection**

- Staff have not been adequately trained to communicate and work with parents.
- Parents do not understand school work that is being sent home.
- School communicates with family only when there is a problem
-

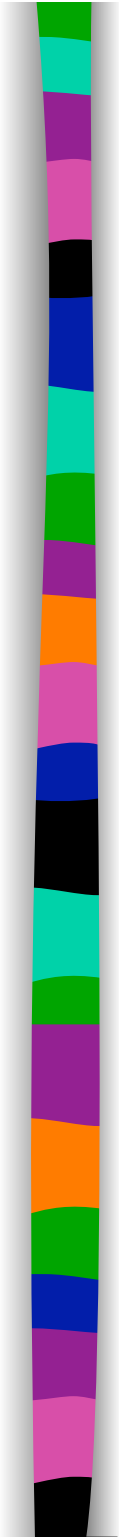


## Key Strategies to Build and Enhance Family Involvement



“The strongest and most consistent predictor of parent involvement at home and school are specific school programs and teacher practices that encourage and guide parent involvement” (Dauber & Epstein, 1993, p. 61).

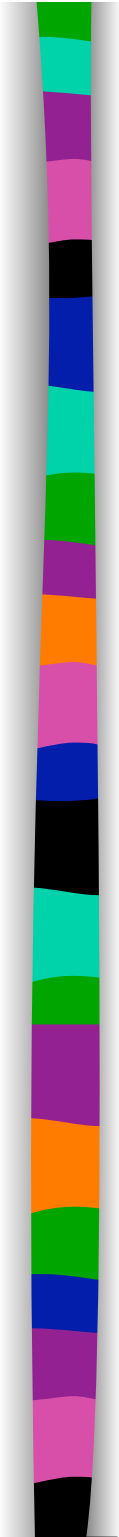




## Key Strategies



- Physical Environment
- School Culture
- Relationships and Communication
- Staff Development



## Key Strategies



- **Physical Environment**
- School Culture
- Relationships and Communication
- Staff Development

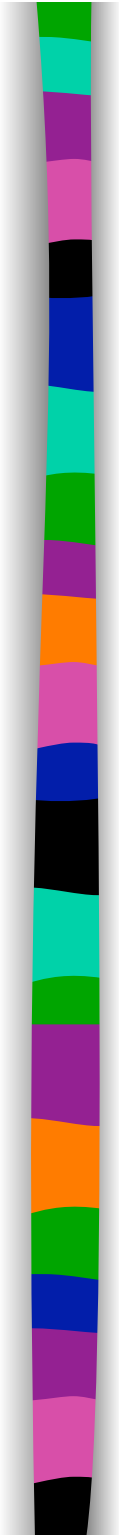


# Physical Environment



## How do we look? How do we say “Welcome”!

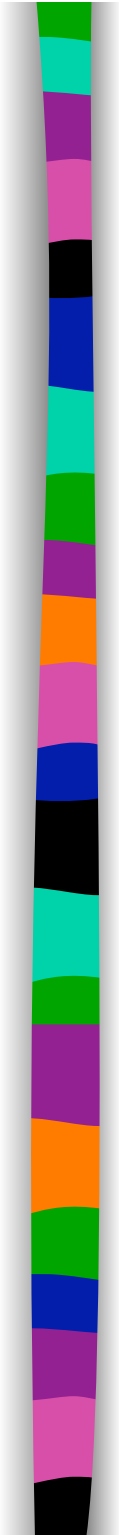
- The physical space is well lit inside and out
- The physical space is clean and picked up inside and out
- Welcome signs at all entrances are:
  - Easy to read
  - In the languages represented by families
- Directional signs in the physical space are:
  - Pointing to the office, classrooms and restrooms
  - In the languages represented by families



## Key Strategies



- Physical Environment
- **School Culture**
- Relationships and Communication
- Staff Development



# School Culture



## How does our school “work”?

- A structure is in place that parents understand
- The school culture is demystified when mission, policies, and expectations are communicated to families verbally and in writing.
- Parents are informed of opportunities for involvement in the school and home.
- A no-fault problem solving approach has been implemented.
- The reciprocity of ideas between school staff and family's are acknowledged and honored.

## Key Strategies



- Physical Environment
- School Culture
- **Relationships and Communication**
- Staff Development

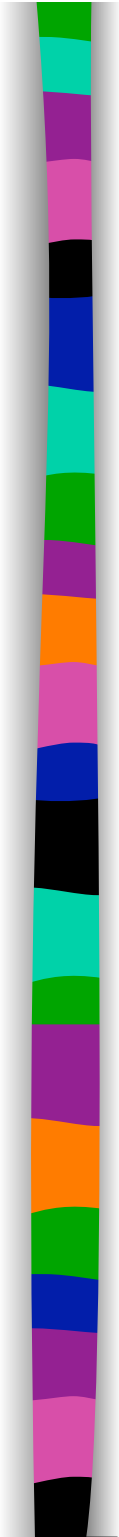


# Relationships and Communication



## How do we relate to and communicate with our families?

- Relationship building
  - Is proactive and initiated by all staff
  - Recognizes, respects and addresses family interests and needs
  - Honors class and cultural differences
  - Embraces a philosophy of partnership
  - Is ongoing and circular
- Communication
  - All Staff have an integral role in building and enhancing the school to home connection
  - Teaching staff have a pivotal role in communication
  - Is ongoing and circular



## Key Strategies



- Physical Environment
- School Culture
- Relationships and Communication
- **Staff Development**





# Staff Development

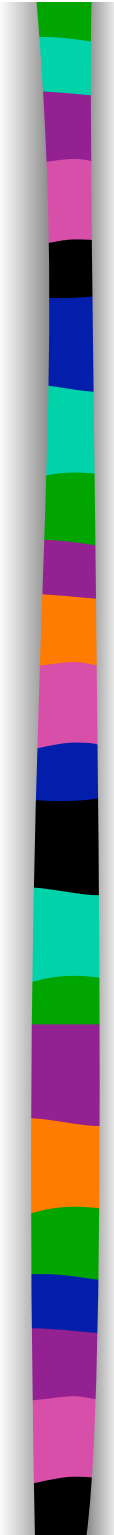


## **School wide endeavor...all staff included**

- New staff orientation
- Integral and ongoing component of staff development
- Assess comfort and experience levels of staff in working with families

## **Training Component and Topics**

- Provide explicit staff development in engaging and involving families
  - Relationship development and enhancement
  - How to communicate and work with families
    - Verbally
    - In writing
- Provide ongoing opportunities to learn how to work with families facing challenges e.g. divorce, family violence, substance abuse, poverty, homelessness



# What is Our Organization's Plan?



**This is in place...**

**These are next steps...**

Physical Environment

Physical Environment

- 
- 

- 
- 

School Culture

School Culture

- 
- 

- 
- 

Relationships and Communication

Relationships and Communication

- 
- 

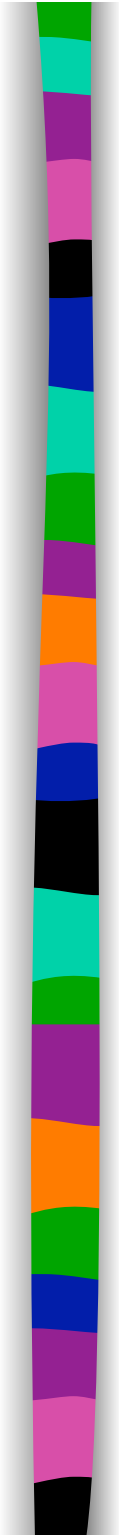
- 
- 

Staff Development

Staff Development

- 
- 

- 
-



Thank you for coming!

**Cathy Morrissey, BSW, M.Ed.**

Program Consultation

Training~Facilitation~Implementation