DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 371 896   PS 022 526

AUTHOR   Goetz, Kathy, Ed.
TITLE   Family Support and School-Linked Services.
INSTITUTION   Family Resource Coalition, Chicago, IL.
REPORT NO   ISSN-1041-8660
PUB DATE   93
NOTE   56p.
PUB TYPE   Collected Works - Serials (022)
JOURNAL CIT   Family Resource Coalition Report; v12 n3-4 Fall/Win
                1993-94

EDRS PRICE   MF01/PC03 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS   *Agency Cooperation; Cooperative Programs; *Family
                Programs; Institutional Cooperation; Parent
                Education; Parent Materials; Parent Participation;
                Program Descriptions; Program Evaluation; Shared
                Resources and Services; Social Services
IDENTIFIERS   Family Resource and Support Programs; *Integrated
                Services; *School Based Services

ABSTRACT
        This double-number newsletter issue makes the case
for collaborations between families, schools, and communities as a
stronger force for educating and enriching the lives of our children.
It also highlights places where such partnerships are working. The
newsletter includes the following articles (1) "Family Support and
School-Linked Services: Variations on a Theme," on the different
origins and priorities of such programs; (2) "Moving from Principles
to Practice: Implementing a Family-Focused Approach in Schools and
Community Services"; (3) "A Framework for Improving Outcomes for
Children and Families"; (4) "Training for the Future: Family Support
and School-Linked Services"; (5) "Parent Involvement: Does It
Matter?"; (6) "Developing Family and Community Involvement Policies:
Guidelines for School Districts"; (7) "A Funder's Perspective on
School-Linked Services"; (8) "Learning from Denver Family Resource
Schools: The Model and the Process"; (9) "New Partners in New York
City: School Reform through Intermediary Collaborations"; (10)
"Building Beacons for Children and Families in New York City"; (11)
"Rural Schools and Service Integration: They Seem Willing--But Are
They Able?"; (12) "Kentucky Looks at the First Year of Its Statewide
Program and Charts a Course for the Future"; (13) "Motorola: A
Corporate Commitment to School-Linked Collaborations; and (14)
"Information Services for Parents from ERIC/EECE." In addition, the
newsletter contains profiles of several collaborative support
programs and projects, including four grantees of the Dewitt-Wallace
Reader's Digest Fund. (HTH)

report

FALL/WINTER 1993 Volume 12, Numbers 3 & 4
—DOUBLE ISSUE—

FAMILY SUPPORT AND SCHOOL-LINKED SERVICES

FAMILY
RESOURCE
COALITION

Families, Schools, and Communities...
In This Issue

Families and the systems that serve them need to work togther. The necessity for linkages among schools, families, and communities is based on the premise that as partners they can educate and enrich the lives of children, their families, their schools, and their communities.

As a result of a federal grant and subsequent support from the Danforth Foundation, the Family Resource Coalition has created the National Resource Center for Family Support Programs and its School-Linked Services Division. The division collects in-depth information and provides enhanced technical assistance on successful school-linked collaborative projects: those programs which seek to improve school outcomes for children through strong partnerships with parents, social services outside the school, and other community resources.

This issue of the *FRC Report* is part of the School-Linked Services Division's efforts to make the case for collaborations between schools, families, and communities and to highlight places where such partnerships are working. For more information about family support and school-linked services, call the Family Resource Coalition, 312/341-0900.

Bette Wilson

BETTE WILSON
Coordinator, School-Linked Services Division

◆

Table of Contents

4

FAMILY SUPPORT AND SCHOOL-LINKED SERVICES:
Variations on a Theme

by Sharon L. Kagan and
Peter R. Neville

In the five years since the last *FRC Report* on school-related child and family services, we have witnessed a proliferation of programs, an expanding interest at the legislative level, and an increasingly widespread public acknowledgment of the need for comprehensive family services. Indeed, the movement to provide an integrated and comprehensive array of supports for children and families is reaching a critical stage. We have established promising program models, which swiftly gained broad-based commitment, and we have made some inroads into established systems. We now face the challenge of institutionalizing these reforms on a system-wide basis—what Bruner has called "moving from marginal to mainstream."[1]

Having arrived at the brink of major reform, we need to come to some degree of consensus on the definitions and terminology we apply to our efforts. Specifically, we have not yet clarified the meaning and relationship of two terms—family support and school-linked services. Their many strategic similarities often lead people to use these terms interchangeably, but equating them obscures subtle but critical differences in the origins and priorities of the school-linked service and family support movements. Acknowledging the similarities and differences can not only help us refine our understanding of these approaches, but also can help us clarify the rich and unique lessons each movement has to contribute to fundamental change in education and human service delivery.

Similarities
The confusion over terminology is not without good reason, given that family support and school-linked services share many of the same philosophies, strategies, and goals. Both recognize the need to improve the health, education, and social welfare of children and families if children are to develop and grow successfully. Both strive to create flexible and nonhierarchical staffing structures, to be responsive to their communities, and to involve parents collaboratively as both planners and consumers of services. School-linked services and family support also attempt to tailor services to meet the multifaceted needs of individuals, transcending the narrowly defined boundaries established by conventional categorical programs. Further, their shared commitment to universal service shuns the traditional deficit orientation of human services, which stresses the weaknesses of the neediest, and replaces it with the philosophy that *all* children and families can benefit from support. All together, these similarities demonstrate the very close parallels between the two movements. They help explain why people frequently overlook differences between them and why individual programs may seem to reflect both approaches simultaneously.

Differences
When programs are not viewed in isolation, however, but from a broader perspective as elements of growing national movements, it becomes clear that despite their multiple similarities family support and school-linked services have developed from different origins and often place different priorities on the goals of their services.

Origins
The school-linked service and family support movements emanate from two very different histories and environments, each having unique opportunities for and barriers to action. School-linked service efforts have conventionally grown up in the context of rigid school and human service bureaucracies. In order to implement their reform philosophies and goals, even in isolated programs, school-linked efforts have faced the challenge of altering entrenched modes of service delivery and bringing together traditionally independent agencies—each with its own orientation, agenda, philosophy, and professional standards—into collaborative partnerships.

Drawing heavily on the concepts and techniques of service integration efforts to effect such change, the school-linked service movement since its inception has had to contend directly with the legacy of power relationships—how the control over service planning and delivery has been allocated—that have long characterized schools and human service systems. In essence, school-linked services have needed to reshape the distribution of power and authority along four dimensions, in each case working to eliminate competition and increase power-sharing.

First and fundamentally, bringing together a comprehensive array of services has required restructuring the relationships among agencies that have traditionally operated independently of each other. Before school-linked services can devise strategies for bringing all service providers to the table and, as Gardner notes, prevent any single agency

from dominating the collaborative effort and alienating other participants[2], they must address long histories of competition for resources and influence, deep-seated professional biases and animosity, and regulations that hinder working across categorical lines.

Second, school-linked service efforts have had to grapple with established hierarchies among staff members. Multi-tier structures of decisionmakers and subordinates have had to be reconsidered in order to create power-sharing, flexibility, and responsiveness among staff in school-linked service programs. Staff have had to reexamine their own roles and authority, in some cases learning to relinquish control, and in others becoming accustomed to a new sense of ownership and recognition on planning and governance issues.[3]

Third, substantive parent and community influence in school operations has long been a point of controversy and confrontation.[4] Although the goals of school-linked services include working closely with parents and their communities as equal allies in governing comprehensive service efforts, achieving and sustaining such equity and interaction has frequently been hindered by schools' and other service agencies' historical reluctance to share their decision-making authority with parents.

Related to the restructuring of parent-school relations, the fourth institutional legacy of power-sharing (or its lack thereof) that school-linked services have faced has been the traditional hierarchical relationship between program staff and service consumers. Breaking down such legacies and establishing a voice for families in determining their needs and how services are provided has been a considerable challenge for proponents of school-linked services.

The family support movement, on the other hand, originated outside mainstream institutions and systems. Though family support has made recent forays into system bureaucracies, historically it has not had to contend with traditions of inflexibility and institutionalized cultures of competition to the degree that school-linked services have. As a ___ of this freedom,

family support has been able to explore and develop the types of power-sharing relationships among individuals (e.g., among staff and between staff and families) that have come to characterize the principles and practices of the movement. Indeed, family support has made considerable advances in the areas of community ownership, voluntary participation, and flexible responsiveness to need. Moreover, when launched, family support programs did not have institutional *change* of mainstream bureaucracies as their goal. They could contour their agenda to *create* programs that were designed precisely to mitigate the conventions associated with complex social service institutions.

Priorities of Service

In addition to differences in origin, and perhaps in part because of them, family support and school-linked services often prioritize their service goals differently. We do not suggest that family support and school-linked services focus on two entirely different types of service, but we believe that an examination of the emphases these two movements place on the services they provide reveals a slight divergence in approach.

Based in the child-serving context of the schools, school-linked services tend to focus primarily on meeting the comprehensive needs of the child; they concentrate on broadening the spectrum of services, focusing on children's physical and social as well as cognitive development. Such programs also recognize the benefit of supports provided to the family (e.g., parent education, job training), although in

reality they tend to see family services within the context of forging comprehensive services for children, not as its primary raîson d'être. In contrast, family support places primary importance on serving the family as a unit, contributing to the growth and well-being of all members. Such an approach does not imply the neglect of services for children; rather, enabling the family to operate successfully as a unit and to fulfill its own tasks and responsibilities is viewed as the most effective and efficient means of supporting the child's healthy development.[5] In family support, then, the needs of the family as a unit are primary.

Further, although both movements express the importance of comprehensiveness, perhaps school-linked efforts can bring together a wide range of services because they are located within established service systems and close to major funding streams. As family support moves into schools and other mainstream institutions, it is recognizing that systemic reform is critical and that there is a growing need for truly comprehensive services. As family support begins to concentrate on incorporating more services, it faces the challenges of maintaining the movement's philosophy and traditions of cooperation and power-sharing—many of the same issues of systemic change with which school-linked service efforts have long grappled.

Sharing the Knowledge

Recognizing both the similarities and the subtle differences between family support and school-linked services effectively serves a dual purpose. In addition to helping clarify our shared definitions of the terms, this analysis enables us to outline the knowledge and expertise that each movement has accumulated in the course of its development. As both family support and school-linked services work toward further expansion and systemic reform, each has something to teach and something to learn.

Much in the same way that children's early experiences shape their

"As both ___-linked serv___ ___and syst___ teach an___
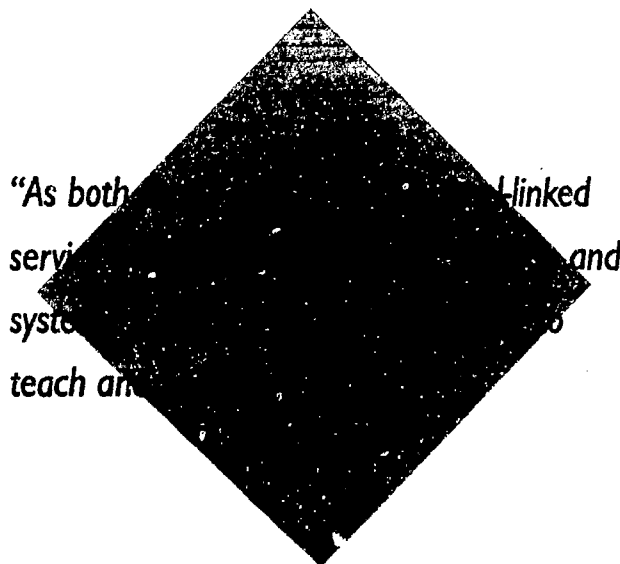
personalities and strengths, the unique origins of family support and school-linked services have strongly marked the characteristics and areas of expertise of the two movements. In working toward many of the goals it shares with family support, the school-linked service movement has faced numerous entrenched barriers as a result of its position within established institutions. As a result, it has developed a degree of expertise in integrating services and reshaping ossified structures and power relationships, skills that are critical in bringing these sorts of efforts into mainstream systems on a larger scale. Less restricted by hierarchical *institutional* cultures, family support has traditionally been able to focus more on restructuring the relationships among *individuals*, helping to elaborate the characteristics and delivery mechanisms that define the reformed approach to education and human services. Consequently, though growing from somewhat different roots, family support and school-linked services can each provide critical knowledge and skills to inform the systemic reform of child and family services.

Reviewing their differences in priorities, we again find that family support and school-linked services contribute complementary elements to a reformed service system. Whether highlighting the

importance of addressing the family as a unit or stressing the need for a truly comprehensive range of services, each contributes important lessons that future reform efforts, be they school-linked, family support, or other, would do well to heed.

Notes

BRUNER. C. (in press). State government and family support: moving from marginal to mainstream." in *Putting Families First: America's Family Support Movement and the Challenge of Change.* ed. S. L. Kagan and B. Weissbourd (San Francisco Jossey-Bass).

· GARDNER, S.L. (1992). Key issues in developing school-linked integrated services. in *The Future of Children: School-Linked Services.* ed. R.E. Behrman. 2(1):85-94.

' CARREÓN, V. and JAMESON, W.J. (1993). *School-Linked Service Integration in Action Lessons Drawn from Seven California Communities* (San Francisco: California Research Institute, San Francisco State University).

' FRUCHTER, N., GALLETTA, A., and WHITE, J.L. (1992). *New Directions in Parent Involvement.* (Washington, DC: Academy for Educational Development, Inc.).

KAGAN, S.L. (1986). Home-school linkages: History's legacy and the family support movement. in *America's Family Support Programs: Perspectives and Prospects,* S.L. Kagan, D.R. Powell, B. Weissbourd, & E.F. Zigler, eds. (New Haven and London: Yale University Press).

BRONFENBRENNER, U., and NEVILLE, P. (in press). America's children and families in international perspective: Challenge and response. in *Putting Families First: America's Family Support Movement and the Challenge of Change.* S.L. Kagan & B. Weissbourd. eds. (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass).

RESOLVING TURF ISSUES

When a multiagency collaboration effort has progressed to the stage where potential partners are at the table, try the following group activity to cast turf issues in a new light:

Divide participants into small groups making sure that each group has at least one representative from each partner agency. Pose several hypothetical problems to the groups and ask each person in the small group to indicate what services s/he can contribute to the solution. Reconvene the large group and have each small group report.

This activity sparks discussion, reinforces the collaborative spirit, and clarifies strengths of particular partners. It also is a constructive way for collaborative partners to find out about each other and the services other organizations provide.

Sharon L. Kagan, Ed.D. is senior associate at the Bush Center in Child Development and Social Policy at Yale University. A frequent consultant to the White House, Congress, the U.S. Departments of Education and Health and Human Services, and numerous foundations and professioinal associations. Lynn is chair of the Family Resource Coalition's board of directors, chairperson of the National Education Goals Panel Readiness Technical Committee, and a former governing board member of the National Association for the Education of Young Children. Author of numerous publications, she has edited or co-edited nine books, including America's Family Support Programs *and* Putting Families First.

Peter R. Neville is a research assistant at the Bush Center in Child Development and Social Policy at Yale University. His work has focused on family support, service integration, early care and education, and job training and family education for Head Start families.

MOVING FROM PRINCIPLES TO PRACTICE:

Implementing a Family-Focused Approach in Schools and Community Services

by Judy Langford Carter

What is a Family-Focused Approach?

In the daily course of business for innovators in the human service and education fields, it is not uncommon to hear or read a set of words that by now have a meaning all their own. We recognize "comprehensive, collaborative, integrated, child-centered, family-focused community-based, school-linked, consumer-driven, flexible, responsive, empowering, preventive, and ..." as descriptors of an idealized human service and education system believed to be capable of producing better outcomes for children. In spite of our facile use of the words, each interrelated principle represents a complex challenge when it comes to implementing it in the real lives of families and communities and service providers. A "family-focused approach" in schools and community services—the subject of this paper—is one element of a larger system. We can define and illustrate it as though it stands alone, but we cannot fully implement it without simultaneously implementing the full litany of values from which it was extracted. A fully effective family-focused approach will ultimately require a surrounding system that is comprehensive, collaborative, and integrated. The discussion in this paper of a family-focused approach should be viewed in that context.

A family-focused approach grows from a logical sequence of beliefs: If better child outcomes are the shared goal of the community and its institutions, then we must use all the resources necessary to achieve those outcomes to their fullest potential. And if as research

and common sense indicate, the family is the most important and effective resource available to any individual child, then we must make this resource the

"A fully effective family-focused approach will ultimately require a surrounding system that is comprehensive, collaborative, and integrated."

cornerstone of strategies to improve children's well-being. Finally, if the family's impact is to be fully realized, we must develop a partnership among all the resources that can make a difference in a child's life—families, schools, and services. A family-focused approach, then, acknowledges the central role families play in their children's well-being, shifts the traditional roles of other institutions that service children to reflect this new understanding, and creates (or expands, or redeploys) community supports to assist families in carrying out their roles.

In this context, a family-focused approach for schools and community services is not just an issue of frontline practice—that is of how teachers, social workers, health practitioners, and others interact directly with families. Incorporating a family-focused approach throughout the daily life of schools and community services requires these

institutions to fundamentally change the way they view their missions as well as their relationships with families and with each other, as part of a whole community system supporting healthy development for children.

In the traditional system, families are rarely visible: institutions serve individual children or individual adults, and the other people in "clients'" lives are important only when they pose specific and identified problems to the primary recipient of service. In the system we envision, families and child-serving institutions together become full partners in the enterprise of achieving better outcomes for children. Getting from here to there is the hard part.

Implementing a Family-Focused Approach

Implementing a family-focused approach is a developmental process which takes time, as each of the partners—families, school, service providers, and community institutions—renegotiates its role and accommodates the others in a new collaborative partnership. Like any other developmental process, implementation can move quickly when conditions are right but can be significantly delayed or obstructed by problems. Implementation involves changes in policy and practice, redefining roles for frontline workers (such as teachers) and managers (such as principals), extensive effort to gain parent participation in the whole process, and changes in policies at the school and community-service level and beyond that are impeding the process. Local, county, and state government policies and

practices often block a family-focused approach and can sometimes take a long time to change. A strong, well-planned, fully-supported neighborhood effort can make a good case for the necessary changes; and involvement of key policymakers at these levels early in the process can build useful relationships and understandings for later work.

The path of moving from talk to action in a local community is not mysterious: engagement and trust-building to ensure participation come first; then analyzing, planning and working out specific issues both within agencies and across agency boundaries; and finally reflecting on, refining, and building an ongoing partnership from successful beginnings. This process parallels a family-support approach to working with individual families and resembles the ways service providers develop collaborations. The elements are not exclusive or one-time events; they are interdependent and continue to circle back and repeat themselves over time as the process develops.

Gaining Participation

Experience in communities where a family-focused approach has taken hold shows that very little happens unless school leadership is committed to the process. Community service agencies can work closely with other partners and can approach their work from a family-focused perspective, but their impact is usually limited to their specific service area and to the relatively small number of families they serve. Parents are rarely in a position to come knocking on the doors of schools and service agencies demanding a response, unless they are organized because of concern over a single issue which does not always translate into a different overall approach. Occasionally, a charismatic service provider with strong backing from parents takes the first step toward a family-focused approach, but eventually, the school's involvement is essential to making such an approach work. The school is the connection to all the children in a community, and its leadership in reaching out to families and other agencies is critical.

We must stress that looking to schools for leadership on a new approach does not diminish the schools primary function as educators of children, nor does it burden schools with the full range of issues that families might bring to it. A truly functional partnership among families, schools, and communities

should enable families and the other community institutions and agencies serving them to work together effectively to meet the "non-school" needs of children. When this occurs, schools are able to fill their educational role more effectively.

It is most common for an effort to engage parents in a school-family-community partnership to be led by an active and progressive school principal who takes the initiative with families of children in his/her school. The goal may be increasing parent involvement in school activities, getting input for planning a new program, increasing school attendance through parents' help, or simply finding out more about the barriers children face to succeed in school. Trust-building starts with reaching out to families, a sometimes difficult task especially when families are accustomed to an adversarial relationship with schools or community services.

Principal Mattie Tyson personally visited every family whose child attended her school on Chicago's west side, listening carefully to what each one had to say about the school, their children, and the issues and problems they faced. It took a year to complete the first round of visits. And the visits were just the first step in a larger process that included involving teachers in establishing and maintaining relationships with parents, reaching out to community

NO-COOK COOKBOOK
Children are notorious for coming home after school HUNGRY. Why not have your parent group collect recipes that don't require cooking and publish a brochure for kids? Examples of easy, no-cook snacks include: no-bake peanut butter cookies, unique kebobs (like marshmallow, banana, strawberry, and apple or cubes of ham, cheese, cucumber, cherry tomato, and pickle), and cracker sandwiches (cream cheese and jelly, cheese spread and olive).

service providers whose assistance was needed to serve the school's families, establishing easy ways for teachers and other school staff to connect with service providers, making connections with local businesses which then contributed in many ways to the school, and most important, continually responding in concrete ways to families' expressed needs. One concrete response was the school's acquisition and installation of sewing machines for parents to use to make the required school uniforms for their children. Over time, as an increasing number of parents felt needed, wanted, and comfortable coming to the school, they worked together with teachers and school personnel on community issues such as drugs. Teachers felt supported in their jobs; service providers responded when called; and children began to accomplish more in school—the goal everyone wanted in the first place. The principal's visible, committed leadership in gaining parents' trust was key to starting and maintaining a process that went far beyond simply getting a few parents to be more involved in their children's school.

While input and participation from families is vital to implementing a family-focused approach, buy-in from frontline staff and administrators is equally important. There must be shared accountability: without support from one another, families, schools, and other institutions will have a hard time succeeding at the job of producing a healthy, educated child.

Most front-line staff know the need for a collaborative partnership better than anyone else; they experience the frustration of working without it every day. Their enthusiasm to work hard toward implementing new and sometimes difficult ideas, such as a family-focused approach, will be limited by a lack of knowledge and skill, a lack of time and energy, and a healthy skepticism about the value of the end result. Leadership for change with people whose jobs are directly affected by it has to include not only provisions for skill-building and time to absorb a new perspective, but new expectations and new support for job performance in a new system.

Identifying Issues: Solving Problems

Once partners are on board and willing to work together, the analysis and continuous work on needed changes in policy and practice can begin. Each agency or institution has its own analysis

to do, and the partners together have common issues to resolve. In real communities, this aspect of work toward a family-focused system usually grows most easily from a specific case or a specific issue that involves several stakeholders. The impetus may be a funding source's mandate for a family-focused approach to an issue such as substance-abuse prevention or child-abuse prevention, school restructuring efforts that acknowledge the need for a family-focused approach, or another highly visible problem that has created a public demand for solution.

A Chicago case illustrates an urgent need for problem-solving across agencies: A brother and sister attempted to enroll in a Chicago high school when school opened in the fall. They were sent home with a note from the school nurse stating that they could not enroll until they had documentation of immunizations. After several weeks, they returned with the right documentation, but were told by the attendance clerk that their mother was required to appear in person to reinstate them in school. The children explained that their mother had some problems with drugs and that most of the time, they lived with their grandmother, who could come to reinstate them. Because the grandmother was not the legal guardian as required by school policy, they were not allowed to enroll. No one knows where they went.

None of the policies involved here were intended to keep children out of school; they were made to ensure the safety and well-being of children and the participation of parents. None of the people involved failed to do their jobs; they did exactly what they were supposed to do. But a family-focused approach, across agencies, could have prevented this all-too-common occurrence. The school, the health system, and the substance abuse treatment agency must work together, as well as in their own systems, to unravel the problem and prevent it from happening again. Each of them must also work on policymaking levels to alter the policies and practices that created an insurmountable barrier for these children to attend school.

Many communities already have experienced a family-focused approach to problem-solving across agencies. Teen

parent problems, programs for children with special needs, and maternal and child health initiatives have all required more than one agency to work together around a whole-family agenda. In some instances, the agencies have established ongoing mechanisms to regularly identify and resolve issues. In the Kentucky Integrated Delivery System (KIDS), schools regularly convene all the service providers involved with students for case presentations, ensuring that coordination and problem-solving happens in a timely way. Over time, the trusting relationships developed among service providers, combined with systematic attention to issues emerging from case presentations, have led beyond

"Trust-building starts with reaching out to families, a sometimes difficult task especially when families are accustomed to an adversarial relationship with schools or community services."

improved services for specific children, to policies and practices among all the agencies that are more family-focused and collaborative.

Building a Working Partnership that Lasts

Moving from problem-solving to establishing a family and systems partnership that lasts over time is the third aspect of implementing a family-focused approach. An ongoing partnership goes beyond linkages and agreements made by individual parts of the system. It develops a mechanism for establishing desired outcomes for the whole system and accepts a shared accountability for them. The longterm goal of the ideal partnership is a full complement of resources easily accessible to every child in a neighborhood as needed, beginning with a family adequately supported to do its job as chief nurturer and advocate.

A Normative System that Supports Families

A family-focused partnership requires planning and analysis that goes beyond the scope of its members and into the larger community. Over time, a successful partnership needs to continuously assess and develop the whole system of community support—both formal and informal—available to families so that they are able to be the best possible resource for their children. Families must have many opportunities to participate directly in the assessment and identification of needs. Families usually DO know best what they need to assist their children, but well-meaning schools and community services rarely ask them. Planners seldom go beyond surveying traditional provider agencies or analyzing demographic data to find out how well families are being supported in the larger community. A lasting partnership cannot accomplish its goal without assessing how well its community is supporting families with accessible health care, economic opportunities, childcare, adequate safety, affordable housing, recreation, education and information about child development, and opportunities for the development of social networks for all families. These essential elements of a normative system—the resources that have to be there for ALL families to survive and thrive—are often overlooked. Most planning is done on the basis of traditional numerical "needs" and counting government services, which are only available when families have "failed" in some identifiable, eligibility-producing way. Successful child development and the improved child outcomes we are seeking require a workable, nurturing normative system. Monitoring its status and the gaps that need filling—and developing resources to fill the gaps from ALL available sources—is a primary function of a family-focused partnership.

Specialized Services

A second primary function is ensuring that the specialized services—which only some families need—work well together and fit comfortably into the larger community system. Child welfare,

juvenile justice, public aid, and services to children with special needs offer specific resources when families are having difficulty. A family-focused approach in these systems is critical to harnessing all available resources toward improving the capacities of these families to adequately care for their children. Close and timely cooperation among schools, special services, and other community resources can identify and support families in need of assistance before their small problems grow into large ones.

Hawaii's Healthy Start program, which contacts all mothers at the time their babies are born, offers voluntary, supportive home-visiting to families identified as being at risk of later problems. The home visits provide coordinated access to the full range of services—both formal and informal—available to families in their communities, and a long-term relationship aimed at supporting and enhancing the family's own capacity.

Implementation Challenges

No community has yet fully implemented a family-focused approach, although an increasing number of neighborhoods and localities have put many of the elements in place. The tunnel vision with which schools and community services have sometimes operated, focusing on a single child or a single service, has been broadened to accommodate the vital role of the child's family and the impact of the child's larger community in achieving the best outcomes. Every linkage made, every problem solved, every parent involved, is one more step in the direction of building the partnerships necessary to sustain a system that is "comprehensive, collaborative, integrated, child-centered, family-focused, community-based, school-linked, consumer-driven, flexible, responsive, empowering, preventive, and..." At the same time, to give the new system a chance, we need to define more fully the concepts of 'family support' and 'family focus.' We must also address potential barriers to implementation." Among the questions to be answered:

What is the full scope of changes in policy and practice needed to create institutions that are truly family-focused and family-friendly?

Incremental changes are helping schools and agencies to become more nurturing and supportive entities. Yet, one part of an organization may change

and another continue with contradictory practices. A school may operate a morning program for preschool-age children and their parents, yet have a sign on the front door that says to parents of schoolage children: "If you are picking your child up after school, please wait outside the building." An agency may encourage workers to talk with parents about child-development programs, yet have a waiting room without toys or activities for children. What are the essential elements that reflect a family-friendly and family-focused institution? How can an institution assess the extent to which it is fully manifesting a family-focused approach? How can the necessary changes be put into place? How can potentially competing needs be balanced for example, allowing community access to the school building and preserving the safety of students?

How can local communities and institutions gain the flexibility and discretion needed to implement a family-focused approach?

The most important characteristic of an effective family-focused approach is its adaptation to its community. Moreover, the extent to which local administrators have authority to institute a more family-focused approach in their schools and agencies will dramatically influence the speed and scope of implementation. How can state and local governments ensure high-quality standards for programs and practice, but at the same time allow flexibility and responsiveness at the community level and family level? What policies need to be changed to facilitate local control and adaptation? What policies and practices need to be changed to allow individual administrators to improve their agency's or school's perspective? How would the role and accountability of individual administrators change in a more decentralized system?

What new skills, tools, and technologies are needed in communities in order to implement and support a family-focused approach?

New skills, perspectives, and tools will be essential to fully implement an ongoing family-focused, participatory, cross-systems partnership at the community level. Yet, the technology needed to change from a traditional system to a family-focused one is in the embryonic stage. What needs to be done to strengthen internal and collective

planning capacities of existing institutions? What needs to be done to enable families to participate fully in the process? What is needed in the way of family-focused job descriptions and job performance standards, cross-agency training, adequate family assessment methods, and evaluation criteria for programs? What other tools would help? How can state and local governments help? How can we disseminate adaptable tools as they are developed in local communities?

What new or additional training and staff development is needed to help partners assume new roles and institutionalize a family-focused approach?

Teachers, social workers, and others on the front-line working with children and families are key to implementing a new approach. Without adequate training and team-building across agencies, their jobs may be harder instead of easier. Who will be responsible for developing a training strategy, funding it, and including it in the staff-development activities of each partner? What will the curriculum content include? What training is needed for families to enable them to participate fully in setting priorities for a family-focused system, designing programs, and overseeing the results?

How can schools and human-service agencies create the time necessary for teachers, social service workers and other staff to incorporate a family-focused approach day-to-day?

Responding well to family issues and needs, rather than just to an individual child, requires time—time to listen to the family's issues, time to understand family relationships, time to enter into the collegial partnership that allows a family to trust a professional, and time to collaborate with other community partners. Yet time is the scarcest commodity in both the education and human-services systems. How can schools and human-service providers arrange schedules, shift workloads, or redefine responsibilities so that time is available for a family-focused approach?

PROFILES

Vaughn Family Center
at Vaughn Next Century Learning Center

13330 Vaughn Street
San Fernando, California 91340

Yoland Trevino, Director

The Vaughn Family Center represents a dramatic and innovative shift in paradigms with regard to the way in which health and human services can be comprehensively integrated and delivered. Focused on outcomes for families and driven by user needs rather than provider needs, the center is a model project for restructuring services. It is the most visible result to date of the multi-year FamilyCare Initiative, a collaboration among the United Way North Los Angeles Region, the Los Angeles Educational Partnership (LAEP) and the Los Angeles Unified School District. The initiative's goal is to demonstrate that the provision of integrated school-linked social and health services, in conjunction with early childhood programs, can improve outcomes for children, while strengthening both parents and the greater community.

The state of California has supported FamilyCare's pioneering work in restructuring the curriculum and creating innovative and effective linkages with families, agencies and community organizations. The Center was awarded a Healthy Start grant as part of the state's 1992-1993 initiative, which is designed to enhance prevention and early intervention programs for children. The Vaughn Street Elementary School also received both a restructuring grant and status as a Charter School. This last permits the school to structure its own budget and operate almost as if it were an independent school district.

During its first three years, the initiative has:

• Worked in close partnership with parents in the community to both shape and deliver services

• Engaged a comprehensive array of agencies, teachers and community representatives to plan and implement the demonstration project

• Supported the Vaughn Street Elementary School as it restructures its curriculum to address the ethnic, cultural, deomographic and learning conditions of the area in which it operates.

The initiative's demonstration site— the Vaughn Family Center—is in a converted classroom in the Vaughn Street Elementary School (now known as the Vaughn Next Century Learning Center). It is located in an economically disadvantaged area, where the families are primarily African American and Latino. Many have English language limitations. Their housing is substandard, and violence and crime are commonplace. Close to 40 percent of the children drop out of school before high-school graduation. The site was chosen because the administration, teachers and parents were open to experimentation, and because it showed the potential to make effective linkages with a network of social service agencies.

It has become a veritable "one-stop shopping" center for parents and children who live in the school's neighborhood.

The wide range of programs and services available includes:

• Counseling and support groups conducted in both Spanish and English

• Literacy and ESL classes

• Medical and dental screening services and child immunizations

• Day care and after-school childcare and recreation programs

• Al-Anon groups

• Parenting education classes

• Parent leadership training groups

• Integrated social and educational services for teenagers

• Library program for children and parents

• Case management

"The Vaughn Family Center is governed by an independent board; half its members are parents and the other half are school representatives and human service providers involved in the initiative."

- Legal and tax assistance

- Computer training and job training

- Clothing and food pantries.

In addition to these, Vaughn recently opened an on-site youth center which provides job training and employment assistance to high-risk youth, some of whom are high school dropouts affiliated with gangs, who have served time in jail. The program includes an innovative aspect—an art gallery, to be located at one of the nearby parks. "So many of these youth are right-brained, very creative," says Yoland Trevino, Vaughn Family Center's director. "The gallery will exhibit artwork they've done. They'll be in charge of the program at the gallery and they'll also teach art classes for younger children." The youth center is an one example of the way in which Vaughn Family Center's multi-service program, has evolved as an "urban village," flexibly responding to serve the needs of residents in its community.

All Vaughn services are provided by the center's staff, by representatives from the cooperating agencies, by school personnel, and by neighborhood volunteers, parents, and high-school students.

The Vaughn Family Center is governed by an independent board; half its members are parents and the other half are school representatives and human service providers involved in the initiative. Parents are involved in all aspects of the board's operation. Their diversity, cultural awareness, and viewpoints as service users are critical to the board's policymaking, problem solving, and decisions about the program's philosophy and mission.

The center's director and governing board operate outside the institutional framework of the school and are accountable to program users, funders, and LAEP. As a result, they have been able to freely advocate for the creation of a new culture that meets the needs of the families and children being served. While it is anticipated that the center and the school will eventually develop a common culture with the same values, this initial autonomy has provided the board with flexibility and leverage.

In terms of children's education, outcomes to date have been extremely encouraging. Standardized test scores have improved by 153 percent; more than 100 preschool children, ages 0-5, have been placed in the newly licensed

Family Child Care Homes; all 4-year-olds on the school's pre-Kindergarten waiting list are enrolled in the center's supplementary pre-K programs; more than 70 children, ages 6-12 have received English and math tutoring; and a gifted program has been launched.

At the family and system levels, results have been equally promising. As of June 1993, nearly 250 families had received food staples; 50 had received clothing or financial support for housing; and 35 had been been transported to a variety of medical, dental or mental health services. One hundred families had been involved in either individual, marital or family counseling, or Al-Anon. During one month this past summer, a contract, designed by parents, teachers and administration about their respective responsibilities was signed by 400 families. Another group of parents and teachers participated in conflict resolution training.

At the community level, more than 60 families took part in 360 hours of classes with the Museum of Contemporary Art, all of which enchanced interactions among families, increased the sense of neighborhood; and strengthened the bonding to the Family Center and the school. An "Images of Peace" mural aimed at reducing graffiti and gang activity has been painted, with the cooperation of a local *mercado*.

An important aspect of the Vaughn Family Center is the "give back" from parents. In return for the services they receive, parents contribute by providing childcare, transportation, tutoring, gardening, school and community maintenance, and participation on the center's governing board. Their contributions are tracked by the center's Service Exchange Bank, which is based on the conviction that parents have abilities they are proud to offer.

"The alterable curriculum of the home is twice as predictive of academic learning as is family socioeconomic status."
—Walberg, H. J. (1984). *Improving the productivity of America's schools.* **Educational Leadership, 41:** 19-27.

Trevino points out that the ambitious aims of the Healthy Start program has created its own series of challenges.

Cross-cultural and cross-disciplinary training, in the form of retreats, seminars and luncheons, have been necessary, Trevino says because the overlap of disciplines involved in the project sometimes created stumbling blocks. The school's existing disciplinary policies, for example, did not always jibe with "developmentally appropriate" approach favored by childhood development specialists working with parents and young children in the center's school readiness program. Now, says Trevino, mothers and professionals from the school readiness program observe in the classroom and can provide the teachers with feedback on the children who've been in the program.

Teachers and parents also faced cross-cultural challenges. For the former it was a need to develop a consciousness about the children and parents that avoided labeling and was non-judgmental. "Just because children aren't clean when they come to school doesn't mean the parents don't care," says Trevino. "It may be that they don't have any access to water."

For parents, it was a need to constructively channel their emerging sense of empowerment. Trevino observes that a lot of parents' initial empowerment emerges as anger; it's critical that they learn skills that allow them to deal with teachers in a non-combative manner. "Parents also need to alter some of their own perceptions of teachers," she says. "They don't always consider that a teacher has 30 or more kids in a class, not just their child." Prior to a parent-teacher meeting, the center holds "preheating meetings" to help parents prepare themselves to interact effectively with the teacher.

Trevino sees a number of challenges facing the overall Healthy Start concept. Greater technical assistance capacity is crucial—"our center is one of the few that has T.A. capabilities"—especially as the programs grow beyond the bounds of their original plans. "I never thought we'd have a food pantry or a clothes closet, but if a child comes to school hungry, or in bare feet, the greatest curriculum in the world doesn't mean anything," she says. "The program at the Vaughn Family Center has evolved organically. It's really a movement for community transformation, firing people's imagination to dream that they can be the architects of their own communities."

A FRAMEWORK FOR IMPROVING OUTCOMES FOR CHILDREN AND FAMILIES

by Frank Farrow, Sara Watson, and Lisbeth Schorr

The Improved Outcomes for Children Project (IOCP)* is a multi-year effort designed to help communities improve life outcomes for families and children. It is the "community services and supports" partner of a major national school reform effort, the National Alliance for Restructuring Education. The Alliance is a consortium of organizations funded by the New American Schools Development Corporation (NASDC) and the Pew Charitable Trusts. As part of the Alliance, we (the authors, together with David Hornbeck of the National Center on Education and the Economy and the Business Roundtable) are working with four states and four cities to bring together education and social service staff and to create an environment in which children arrive at school, every day, ready to learn.

Our work is based on the conviction that both school reform and human service reform will be most effective if communities focus clearly on improving measurable outcomes that reflect the wellbeing of children and families. We believe that the performance of both agencies and systems can best be measured by results, and that an outcomes orientation can create a climate of accountability in schools, human services, and the broader community. In addition to our outcomes orientation, our work is informed by the following principles:

- Effective programs and systems focus on children in the context of their families, and on families in the context of their communities.

- Effective community services are comprehensive, high quality, flexible,

and responsive; they are available when and where families need them, and are rendered respectfully and collaboratively.

- Primary supports (libraries, parks, parent groups) should be encouraged, since they are usually where families turn for help first.

- Instead of top-down controls, there must be a commitment to a strong local ownership and control over service delivery strategies.

- The services, supports, and institutions must be responsive to and inclusive of ethnic, racial, and cultural diversity in all aspects of the design, delivery, and governance.

In our work with states and communities we build on what is known about developing effective services, supports, and systems, drawing on the experience to date of many communities and states. In doing so, we are mindful that ultimately, each community will and must develop its own unique programs, policies, and systems.

In this article, we briefly describe the five components of our work:

- Shifting to an outcomes orientation

- Developing a comprehensive system of services and supports that accomplish the desired outcomes

- Conducting the professional training necessary for professionals to work effectively in the reformed system

- Pursuing financial strategies that support comprehensive reform

- Creating a governing system that supports ongoing reform.

Each of these components is enormously complex, and the brief overview in this article only skims the surface of the long and demanding process of reform. (A more comprehensive paper, on which this article is based, covers these ideas in more detail.[1])

Shifting to an Outcomes Orientation

An outcomes orientation means creating, delivering and evaluating services based not on process rules, but on their effects on outcomes for children and families.[2] Instead of designing services to meet agency needs, and evaluating them based on process inputs (such as number of forms filled out), services are designed and evaluated for their effect on the recipients of the service. Shifting to an outcomes orientation is the foundation for change because it drives so many other elements of reform. Outcome accountability can replace—or at least diminish the need for—top-down, centralized micro-management, which holds programs responsible for adhering to rules that are so detailed that they interfere with a program's or institution's ability to respond to families' needs. In this orientation, the question asked of professionals at the front-lines shifts from "Did you do what they told you to do?" to "Did it work?" A different organizational climate results, in which well-trained professionals use their judgment and experience to respond to the needs of children and families, rather than being constrained by pressures which primarily reflect the narrow

14

interests of the bureaucracies within which they work.

Agreement on desired outcomes also facilitates cross-systems collaboration and systems change, fosters greater attention to children and families, and helps to minimize expenditures that don't contribute to improved outcomes. The shared commitment to improve specific outcomes for children can make service integration efforts fall into place—not as an end, but as an essential means of collaborating to achieve improved outcomes.

While the shift toward outcome-based accountability brings many clear advantages, it is not an unmixed blessing. In fact, it carries real risks, which must be reduced through careful design and thoughtful implementation. Demands for documenting outcomes must not be allowed to drive programs to engage in creaming or to distort activities to emphasize only those that result in outcomes that are easy to measure. And some elements of process regulation must remain in place, to safeguard quality and guard against racial and other discrimination.

Developing a System of Comprehensive Services and Supports

Once a community has agreed on a set of outcomes, it must then address the question of what is known about how these outcomes are most likely to be achieved and how communities can utilize this knowledge to achieve the desired outcomes. Communities are likely to find that they need to modify, expand, or create new services and supports, as well as to develop linkages among existing services. One way to identify the needed supports is to undertake the following process.

The first step in using agreed-upon outcomes to shape the analysis and action around needed services and supports is to break the outcomes down into their component parts—for example, increasing healthy births is a result of many other factors, such as reduced school-age pregnancy and improved pre-natal care. Second, communities need to determine the services and supports needed to achieve—or make progress toward— each of the agreed-upon outcomes (and outcome components). The third step is to identify which services and supports already exist in the community, and to determine how effective or ineffective they are in improving outcomes. Effective services

share a number of common attributes, such as being comprehensive, flexible, family-focused, tailored to individual communities, and responsive over time.[3] The fourth step is to undertake a "gap analysis" to determine which needed services and supports are missing, and which are available, but must be restructured or otherwise modified to make them effective. The final, and by far the most difficult, step is to identify and take action needed to put missing services and supports in place, to make all services and supports maximally effective in improving outcomes, and to institutionalize change.

Staff Development and Training

The changes described in this paper require skilled, motivated people to carry them out. Improving outcomes for children can only be done through a well-trained workforce, knowledgeable about their own responsibilities as well as how they fit within the broader service system. For this reason, another component of reform is staff development and training to ensure appropriate skills, attitudes, and commitment among frontline personnel. Such training must emphasize:

- Respectful relationships with children, youth, and families and respect for family diversity

- The importance of involving families in eir children's healthy development

BE A FILM PRODUCER
Cablevision in your community trains area residents to be public access producers. Certified Cablevision producers can then borrow video equipment and use Cablevision's editing facilities. Consider starting your own videotape library and having your productions shown on the public access channel. The training takes about six weeks, one hour per week. The possibilities are endless.

- More flexible, comprehensive, and non-bureaucratic responses to children and families.

Training content would include material in the following areas:

- A family-centered approach: Understanding children in the context of their families, and families in the context of their community settings. Enabling families to develop skills that promote their own use of community resources

- A developmental approach: Understanding children in the context of their developmental stage

- Working collaboratively with other agencies, systems, and community resources

- Enhanced ability to work in reformed services and systems: Professionals equipped with a problem-solving, persevering mindset and problem-solving skills.

Any efforts at new forms of cross-systems, inter-disciplinary training must be sustained by the organizations involved. Therefore, managers and supervisors must also be participants in these professional development activities, so that they will be fully supportive of the new forms of practice.

Building a Stable Financial Basis for a Reformed System

Current fiscal realities demand that communities use every possible creative approach to expand resources available for services and supports.[4] The fiscal strategy we recommend has three parts:

1. **Establish an overall joint program and fiscal strategy that links funding plans to clear program priorities.**
   Program priorities should determine fiscal strategies, not the reverse. To ensure that this occurs, we urge sites to link their program and fiscal agendas through development of an explicit "joint program and fiscal strategy" that identifies priority program goals and the fund sources used to finance them.

2. **Redeploy existing resources**
   While state and local officials often look first to new funding, there are important opportunities to move resources around within the current

system so they are used more effectively. Redeployment ensures that existing funds are well-spent before new resource allocation decisions are made. Specific redeployment opportunities will vary according to each state and locality, but opportunities include the redeployment of staff, such as by outstationing, as well as the redeployment of dollars, such as by shifting residential care funds to support less intensive, preventive services.

3. Refinance and reinvest dollars

Refinancing is the process by which federal funds are used to pa , for services previously financed with state or local funding. This process frees up an amount of state and local money equivalent to the new federal funding, and allows this freed-up money to be reinvested into improved services for families and children. Three titles of the federal Social Security Act provide states the most significant opportunities for refinancing services to families and children:

1. Title IV-E can be used to pay for some preventive and case management costs incurred in the child welfare and juvenile justice systems.

2. Title IV-A (AFDC) can be used for such services as family preservation, protective services, shelter care, and other community responses to emergencies.

3. Title XIX (Medicaid) can be used to claim reimbursement for social and rehabilitative services. EPSDT provisions of Medicaid create considerable opportunity for funding school-based health efforts.

The resources freed-up through refinancing are often regarded as general revenues to be used for any purpose on the state or local agenda. We recommend that states and communities participating in this effort make every attempt to ensure that funds gained through refinancing are reinvested to strengthen children and family services and thus to achieve each community's defined outcomes. Once a reinvestment commitment is made, it must be monitored closely.

Developing Governing Entities

To achieve improved outcomes for children and carry out the other essential components of reform, states and communities are likely to require new forms of community governance at the local level.[5]

The current organization for most services delivered to families and children is top-down, categorical and process-oriented. Each of these characteristics, among others, has thwarted attempts to improve the lives of families and children. Adopting an outcomes orientation leads inexorably to the conclusion that new governing entities are necessary. These new entities must be bottom-up—responsibility for achieving outcomes and delivering services must rest at the most local level. They must exercise responsibility for agencies that are working together toward common goals that cut across agency boundaries to help either an individual family or to advance a broader community policy.

The purpose of these new governance entities is to facilitate community agreement on problems, focus attention on the need for cross-cutting approaches, and create more effective methods of achieving desired outcomes for families and children through improved and more comprehensive strategies of services and supports. This goal requires the development of many new capacities at the local level.

Governance bodies vary in terms of scope, structure, and activities; but there are five basic functions that a governance entity usually must carry out, regardless of its specific substantive focus:

1. Agree on a defined set of outcomes sought by the community for children and families.

2. Identify needs and developing community-wide strategies in response to priority problems confronting children and families.

3. Promote innovative community services in order to ensure the earlier, more accessible, and more responsive service delivery that families want and that schools need to accomplish their education mission.

4. Coordinate fiscal strategies to promote more comprehensive services.

5. Assess and monitor outcomes for children and families so that local service systems create and maintain a "climate of accountability."

The collaborative's role does not replace the responsibility of individual agencies to be accountable. However, the collaborative must reach beyond single agency accountability and determine if the sum total of agency efforts is producing the expected results. In a sense, the collaborative becomes the accountability agent for the service *system*, with each agency continuing to track its own performance within that broader framework.

Any one of these responsibilities is difficult, and all five together represent a major challenge. For that reason, many collaborative governing entities have recognized the need to move toward these responsibilities gradually over time.

Conclusion

This article has discussed elements and strategies that communities can use as they move toward more effective service systems to improve outcomes for children. Within this framework, states and communities must make their own choices, set their own priorities, and determine which strategies work best for them. This framework is advanced now in order to be used, revised, and adapted for each community.

Notes

Center for the Study of Social Policy (1993) *A Framework for Improving Outcomes for Children and Families* (Washington, D.C.: author).

· SCHORR. L with Frank Farrow. David Hornbeck and Sara Watson (1993). *Shifting to Outcome-Based Accountability A Minimalist Approach for Immediate Use.* (Washington, D C.: Center for the Study of Social Policy).

'SCHORR, LISBETH. with DANIEL SCHORR (1988). *Within Our Reach Breaking the Cycle of Disadvantage* (New York: Anchor Books).

'Center for the Study of Social Policy (September 1991) *Leveraging Dollars Leveraging Change Refinancing and Restructuring Children's Services in Five Sites* (Washington. D C., author).

· Center for the Study of Social Policy (1991) *Building a Community Agenda Developing Local Governance Entities* (Washington. D C.: author).

Frank Farrow and Sara Watson are, respectively, director of children's services policy and senior associate at the Center for the Study of Social Policy. Lisbeth Schorr is director of the Harvard Project on Effective Services and author of Within Our Reach.

16

WHATEVER IT TAKES:
## Principal Mattie Tyson and Johnson Elementary School

Mattie Tyson, principal of Johnson Elementary School for the last six years, has turned a poor, neglected, almost forgotten school into a model for service integration and community involvement. Credit her own leadership and charisma for much of that success. "It's been a challege." she grins, "but I've loved every minute of it!"

When Tyson was appointed principal of Johnson in August 1988, she knew that she hadn't drawn a cushy assignment. Aiming to capture community attention with some cosmetic improvements, she first attacked the physical condition of the school. It was dirty and splattered with graffiti. Tyson organized the staff and community in a week-long paint-a-thon. The community was impressed and began to take some pride in the building. The Local School Council (LSC) was energized to tackle the problem of an abandoned building next door to the school that attracted derelicts and drug addicts. The LSC persuaded the demolition court to have the building torn down. They are currently negotiating with local officials to let the school acquire the land in order to build a badly needed social/medical/recreation center. Mattie Tyson has not won that battle yet, but meanwhile she is working with a professional fundraiser to raise money to use the existing school building for recreation and other services by extending its day to 10 p.m.

Once she had the community's attention, Tyson started on the school's countless problems. "I was spending about 75 percent of my time just dealing with behavior," she says, beginning to list some of her challenges. "Kids were fighting, walking out of school; parents were coming in and arguing with teachers and with children; parents were

fighting with other parents. A lot of children were being excluded because they did not have inoculations. Other kids were coming in ill. Minor infections were rampant and were just killing the attendance record. There were parents who needed temporary shelter, lots of problems with teen pregnancy, people who didn't know how to cut through the red tape and take advantage of the services that were available. People just
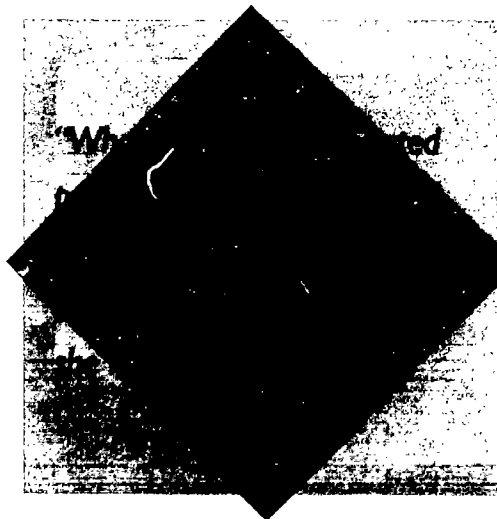
needed a lot of help with a LOT of things."

Tyson knew she had to work fast. Improving student attendance and student achievement was an early goal (she points out that you can't have achievement unless the students are actually attending school). Tyson understood in order to improve the attendance record, she needed to improve the school and improve the relationship between the school, its students, their families, and the community. The school had no discretionary money and lacked supplementary textbooks, materials, and equipment. So, Tyson applied for a grant through the Urban Partnership Program (a project of the Illionis State Board of Education).

The Urban Partnership Program required that Tyson enlist "partners"— community businesses and agencies that would contribute time, money, equipment, or services to improve the school. Tyson was a newcomer to an extremely economically depressed neighborhood, but she was determined to find a partner. She went door-to-door and found a local funeral home whose director was also an artist; he was willing to contribute money to help support the elementary school's art program. He also volunteered his time to help the art teacher and the children plan and organize a juried art show. From this modest beginning, Tyson has built a full-fledged integrated services program. She now has over fifteen partners, among them: Amoco, a neighborhood health clinic (which helped solve the immunization problem), and the Chicago Park District (which allows the school to make special use of the park across the street from it).

Amoco started a math and science tutoring program, Amoco ACES (Amoco Chemical Excellent Students), and about

twenty Johnson students participate. Tyson says, "I think Amoco's long-range goal was to recruit minority employees, which is fine with us. After we had been chosen, I heard that one reason they were so impressed was that I could call every student by name. I really make an effort, but it's actually easy for me." Amoco rewards students for especially good work: one student received a 10-speed bicycle. Each participant in this program is assigned a mentor who is an Amoco employee. Amoco pays for some private high school tuition, and it has promised to cover college tuition for the students in its leadership program. Every December Amoco sponsors what Tyson describes as "the world's biggest Christmas party" at Johnson Elementary School. "Wrapped presents are delivered to the school by an eighteen-wheeler! Every child gets one—and we're talking about tape recorders, boom boxes, cameras...You can just imagine the children's eyes when they see that truck pull up."

Several local mental health centers established ongoing relationships with the school. They have provided counseling for children and families and have conducted parents' workshops. One behavior clinic even provided hospitalization for some children for up to 10 days at no expense. Because AIDS is a severe problem in the school's community, a local hospital has been educating parents and older children about HIV. Tyson also is working with a nun from the neighborhood Catholic church to develop a program for children who are about to be orphaned because their parents are dying of AIDS.

Tyson created a male and female responsibility and social development program, a student mediation board, and an all-school gospel choir—which she is willing to pit against any church choir in the city of Chicago—and a cheerleading squad that placed second in a citywide competition last year. (Grandparents in the community made the cheerleaders' uniforms.) Tyson also started a Parent Education Program (PEP) and has been delighted by its success. PEP works with parents and their preschool children after regular school hours. "I've seen tremendous improvement in parents' skills in terms of being able to work with kids and help them at home," she says. She also added an on-site GED program for parents during the day with childcare provided for their young children.

Tyson says of all her accomplishments she is proudest of her students' tremendous growth in academic achievement, self-esteem, and leadership skills. The male and female responsibility program has led to increased social development of all the students. Tyson is also very proud to see so many parents involved with their children's education. "At first," she says, "the parents wouldn't participate at all in the PTA, but now they're eager to develop their leadership skills. We even sent a parent, along with the parent coordinator, to a recent conference in Washington, D.C."

Plenty of problems remain to challenge Mattie Tyson. She says the biggest barrier to her work is dealing with central office: "Although our LSC has done some wonderful things and is very supportive, you don't control anything unless you control the money." Money and power still stand between Tyson and her dream: building that social/medical/recreational center on the lot next to her school. "These kids have absolutely nothing else to do but get in trouble after school hours," she laments. "Kids are not going to just sit at home. If you don't want them to become involved with drugs, gangs, sex, you have to provide a positive alternative." Resourceful and energetic as she is, you can bet Tyson is going to build that alternative.

This profile was based on an interview by Stephanie Lubin and was written by Grace Wolf and Kathy Goetz.

WISH LIST CATALOG

Schools can use their needs assessments or surveys to compile a comprehensive Wish List. Enlist the assistance of art teachers and students to design a wish catalog illustrating items the school needs. Parents and other volunteers can compile prices for the list. This catalog will be extremely useful for soliciting resources in person or through mailings. The Wish List catalog should include items that individuals, small groups, and large and small businesses could donate.

TRAINING FOR THE FUTURE:
Family Support and School-Linked Services
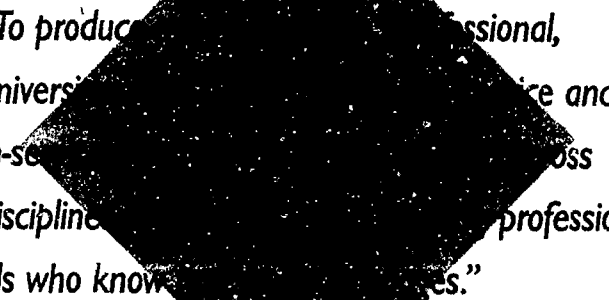
by Sid Gardner

Family support programs are finding that a natural partnership can exist between their efforts and those of public schools. These partnerships have resulted from a convergence of two trends: 1) the growth of family support programs and 2) the expansion of school-linked services. "Full-service schools," and other models (such as the Comer schools) emphasize that many students need health and family services to improve their academic performance.

It is obvious that a hungry child cannot learn as well as one who is well-fed; a sick child is absent more frequently than a healthy one. These truisms, however, do not reflect how most schools function. Public education has passed through cycles over the past century in which health and family services are perceived as very important, only to lapse back into a more insular concern with educational performance, as though it could be separated from the student's home and community.

This has been called "nine-percent thinking", based upon the fact that a child spends only nine percent of her life from birth to adulthood in school. The number makes clear how much impact external factors—the other 91 percent—have on the performance of the child in school.

When we look carefully at the students who need the most help, we nearly always find that they are in the caseloads of three or four agencies at the same time. But the schools and the other agencies serving children and families typically work independently, with no awareness of what other agencies may be trying to do for the family.

A strong family support program can help build some of the bridges needed between agencies working with the same family. Family support programs can use their community-based, parent-grounded strengths to link students to both formal agency services and informal community supports. For example, an after-school program with a strong mentoring staff that works closely with families may be a highly effective extension of what an over-extended teacher is able to do for a student in a classroom of 35. It is this kind of bridge-building between teachers and community resources that family support agencies can achieve, helping schools, rather than demanding more of them than they can deliver.

Once we look at students and their needs, the logic of connecting services that help children who need more than one kind of support is inescapable. But this logic and the power of fragmented, disconnected funding streams are still far apart. One of the barriers to this kind of involvement across programs and agencies is that many of these programs are categorically funded. Categorical programs are, by definition, deficit-driven. You can't get assistance to the student unless you demonstrate that the student can be labeled with a weakness or inadequacy.

Categorical programs were created to assure a better focus on clients who need special help, but the system now has more than 800 categorical funding streams. It has lost much of its ability to respond to the needs of families and the priorities of communities. The family support movement which emphasizes building on strenths—of children, families, communities, and cultures—has a lot to bring to dialogues with schools. Collaborations between schools and family support programs can build on strengths by combining schools' capacity to assess students' competencies and needs with family support programs' ability to go beyond categorical public funding to fill in the gaps between the categories using informal supports and family-reinforcing activities.

The label "school-linked services" is used more widely than school-based services, since locating services physically in schools is generally less significant than establishing effective connections between schools and other family-serving agencies. For many urban schools, space prohibits co-location. But, new bridges can be built to a wide array of community-based agencies which may not be in schools, but are anxious to work as equals with schools.

What does this mean for training professionals who will staff these programs? It means that we need to prepare a new kind of professional to work in some fundamentally different ways. The new skills and competencies needed to work in school-linked services include:

- The ability to work across agency and professional lines, with different kinds

of professionals, as part of a team rather than as a solo performer

- The ability to work with an entire family as the "customer", rather than with the child or the parent in separate programs

- The ability to work across more than one culture, recognizing that family services and supports raise basic cultural issues because culture is rooted in fam.'y

- The ability to be outcome-oriented and accountable for the *results* of working with clients as measured by changes in the lives of those clients, rather than by intake figures or treatment hours

- The ability to work with a new kind of nonprofessional in teams of equals. Parents and others from the community will no longer be added to programs as lower-status "adjuncts" or "aides."

To produce this kind of new professional, universities and other sites for pre-service and in-service training need to work more across disciplines than within them, training professionals who know how to build bridges. The good news is that there are more than thirty universities who have begun this kind of training. The University of Washington, the University of Southern California, Ohio State, Miami University, Florida International, the California State system at Fullerton, San Francisco. Dominguez Hills, Chico, and Long Beach—all of these campuses are changing their curricula and working outside the university to provide active in-service training and technical assistance to communities and schools.

Bt*' despite this progress, it is by no mean certain that higher education at-large will respond fully to this challenge. The disciplinary walls that prevent work across professions are as powerful within universities as the walls built by cat-egorical programs at the community level. While progress is being made, the majority of universities appear content to work within traditional disciplinary boundaries, producing graduates with narrowly defined credentials who resist working in teams.

But in this area too there is good news. A network of nonprofit training and leadership development institutions is developing and it has the skills and the commitment to produce the needed generation of professionals and nonpro-fessionals. Organizations such as the Institute for Educational Leadership, the Georgia Academy, the Council of Governor's Policy Advisors, and, of course, the Family Resource Coalition have all developed training programs that are available in the form of in-service technical assistance. These institutions are far more flexible than most universities. They do not take years to change the content of a course—they can do it as soon as they recognize the demand.

How can these skills be taught? The best programs avoid a classroom-only approach to learning, recognizing that changing professional practice requires seeing professionals *do it differently*, rather than merely hearing the theory of why it should be done differently. These courses, both those offered by universi-ties and by nonprofit organizations, emphasize case studies that illustrate how often a multi-problem family needs help from more than one discipline, and from community supports as well as agency services. The courses devote a lot of time to internships, practicum experi-ence, or other on-site experiential learning. The internships or field-seminar courses assign students to teams at a school, which may include a nurse, a student teacher, a second-year MSW candidate, and a parent. Faculty working

PARENTING HAPPY HOUR
Linda Glaser, a Grant Elementary School teacher from Elgin, Illinois .ld us about their Parenting Happy Hour where a cadre of parents teach other parents how to create a home environment that encourages learning and academic achieve' ent. Grant Elementary collaborates with The Family Study Institute in Chicago to provide the program. Classes are conducted in both English and Spanish. And the evening includes childcare and a light supper.

in such courses often recognize that the student members of such teams are better equipped by their experience to discuss what it means to work as part of an interdisciplinary team than many faculty members who have worked solely within their own discipline for decades. What this sometimes means is that students and f...ulty reverse roles, presenting challenges to all involved.

This training reveals that the best professionals and parents working in school-linked services are themselves important family resources. Their ability to work across cultures and disciplines, and their willingness to explore new ways of doing things are unusual assets. The best way to prod· .e more of them will be to rely on those who are already at work changing systems and helping families. These professionals should have central roles in training programs, not only in providing sites for field-placement education, but as full partners in the training and education process, from curriculum design to classroom leadership roles.

Mario Cuomo has said about politics: "We campaign in poetry, but we govern in prose." In school-linked services, we plan in poetry and we implement in prose. However, sometimes even the implementation is poetry—or music, and at these times, teams function more like members of an orchestra than like a group of discordant prima donnas.

Family support programs can add vital balance to such an orchestra, bringing new and needed voices of diversity, community, and family to a mixture that at times still sounds too much of large, public bureaucracies. Raising these new voices and tones in the midst of the expansion of school-linked services will be a major contribution, assuring wider impact on schools and for families.

Two recent compilations would be helpful in reviewing these issues: the Packard Foundation's 1992 report The Future of Children *was devoted entirely to school-linked services issues, and the forthcoming December 1993 issue of* The Politics of Education Association Yearbook *focuses on models of school-linked services.*

Sid Gardner is director of the Center for Collaboration for Children at California State University at Fullerton and a member of the Family Resource Coalition board of directors.

PROFILES

The Healthy Learners' Project

Fienberg-Fisher Elementary School
1424 Drexel Avenue
Miami Beach, Florida

Tania Alameda, Family Advocate

The Healthy Learners' Project at Fienberg-Fisher Elementary School in Miami's South Beach promotes academic achievement for its students by innovatively integrating human services and by mobilizing parents and the community to advocate for themselves. Designed to demonstrate the ways in which collaboratives can improve healthcare, social, and educational services—which then improve educational outcomes—the project develops empowering strategies that maximize parents' and community leadership. Launched in 1991, Healthy Learners is a joint effort of the Dade County Public Schools, Florida International University and the Department of Health and Rehabilitative Services; the project is funded by the Danforth Foundation and the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. Healthy Learners is committed to building schools as the "hubs of family support villages." According to Fienberg-Fisher's mission statement, its vision is to "have a nurturing, safe and sensitive atmosphere so that all become culturally and environmentally aware, productive citizens."

The project's collaborative model brings together, in a consortium, key community institutions, including: schools, police, the Chamber of Commerce, the Mayor's Office, the university, health services and other volunteer agencies. The Project's only full-time paid staff member is Tania Alameda, family advocate: Parent aides deliver family support services. Part of Florida's Full Services School Movement, the Healthy Learners' Project is the primary site for innovation in Dade County, the

fourth largest school district in the nation; it's also one of the few schools in the nation to operate as a "full-service center." Through the actions of Healthy Learners and its consortium, both school attendance and citizen support for the project have increased.

The low-income community served by the project is comprised primarily of immigrants from Latin America and Eastern Europe; many of its residents are elderly. There are 46 nationalities represented by Fienberg-Fisher's 1000 students, however, more than 80 percent are Latino, many, immigrants and refugees. Area families take their children's education seriously, to the point that many use their own money—a scarce resource—to purchase private bus service to ensure that their children get to school. The community is family-centered; families value their cultural heritage and they have high hopes for their children.

Fienberg-Fisher is a full-service community center with programs open to students, their parents, and their grandparents. It provides social services, vocational training, and meals for senior citizens as well as housing and transportation assistance, job skills training, and homework help. The Homework Club, a voluntary, after-school tutoring program that helps children learn English and provides quiet time and a desk for children who come from homes where finding adequate space or time to complete homework assignments can be a problem, operates daily. Parents have come to know and trust the school as a place where many of them, who don't speak English, know they can turn for help whenever they need it.

During its first two years of operation, the Healthy Learners' Project:

• Developed a family bill of rights

• Made home visits to address learning crises among high-risk children and their families

• Mobilized and trained parents to access needed services and to help each other access and use these services

• Helped parents develop R.A.I.N. (Resource Information and Referral Network). Parent volunteers (RAINMAKERS) assist other community families in solving problems and accessing necessary services such as food stamps and Medicaid. (see accompanying article)

• Mobilized parent Absenteeism Home Intervention teams with the aim of improving school attendance using varied strategies including offering to walk a child to school and serving as volunteer "lice busters" (a problem which was so acute at one point that the school was on the verge of a temporary shutdown)

• Developed new working relationships among the area social service systems to improve access to services, case staffing, and family-friendly supports to available services.

As a result of the efforts of the Healthy Learners' Project, many service providers are co-located or linked to the school, and teachers increasingly ask service providers and RAINMAKER

parents for assistance. Families access to medical services has improved. And, the project has been instrumental in addressing community problems such as poverty, discrimination, housing displacement, hunger, and homelessness.

The Referral and Information Network (R.A.I.N.) is a central component of the Fisher-Fienberg program. Parents who become part of the network receive 40 hours of training; 20 hours learning how to work with the various service agencies, and 20 visiting families in the community to provide assistance and learn about concerns. The RAINMAKERS earn a small stipend of $40 weekly for eight hours of work per week; most volunteer additional hours. Many have gotten jobs in the school as teacher's aides.

A core group of 40 of these parents has also established a significant presence in the community, working against the displacement of poor families and gaining support from housing officials and philanthropists to establish more low-rent housing. They have arranged for an on-site office for Legal Services of Greater Miami to advise families on immigration, housing and other legal issues. And, they've taken on projects such as: earning child-care credentials and identifying sites for daycare facilities; setting up clothing and food pantries; and establishing a job bank.

The Healthy Learners' consortium, which meets monthly, brings parents, program, school, and community representatives together. Even parents with limited English feel increasingly empowered to voice their concerns. At a meeting earlier this year, for example, the agenda included a personal statement by the city's mayor on the city's commitment to family values and community care issues, and a reassurance that the efforts being made by the project and the parent RAINMAKERS were not going unnoticed by the city. A school counselor reported on the efforts to find space in the community to locate portable classrooms for daycare purposes; representatives from the Absenteeism Home Intervention team reported that they were still making home visits based on school referrals and asked the principal to make sure faculty referred children to them as soon as they had three consecutive absences; and there was an update on the progress being made to

have a traffic light installed on a busy street that the students cross each day.

Improved lines of communication and sensitivity to the needs of parents have continued to bring about changes in the ways services are provided. Tania Alameda points out that the idea of services being "consumer-driven" was not initially familiar to many of the service agencies. She cites an example of one service agency that had proven to be less sensitive to parental needs than initially anticipated. Appointments were

often scheduled in a manner that required parents to spend most of the day at the agency, and staff members' anonymity and lack of cultural awareness created barriers for the parents. "When the issue was raised at one of our public meetings of the consortium, the agency was able to hear it. As a result, they provided cultural training for their employees, changed their appointments system and gave their staff members nametags."

RAINMAKERS:
The Parents' Perspective

Denise Gomez and Teresa Martiato have been active participants in the Healthy Learners' Project and the RAINMAK-ERS program from its inception. Both have taken the required preparatory courses that allow them to work both inside the school and in outreach capacities throughout the community on behalf of other families.

Denise Gomez, a single mother of two girls, once coped with a school system that provided no coordinated educational or therapeutic help for one of her daughters, who has special needs. Now, through the Healthy Learners' Project, her daughter gets all the necessary therapy and special education she requires. And Gomez serves as the coordinator for the R.A.I.N. Room, which parent volunteers use as homebase for linking with social service agencies in town.

Teresa Martiato began volunteering at Fienberg-Fisher Elementary School when the oldest of

Teresa Martiato, a RAINMAKER parent says, "This project has given power to the Latino community. Before, if a landlord gave them an eviction notice, the parents didn't know their legal rights. Now they don't get mistreated. The authorities hear us when we speak."

her three children was in kindergarten; she wanted to be close to him. Today, she's an active community leader on housing issues. She is president of the RAINMAKER Board, and has been appointed to the board of directors of the Miami Beach Development Corporation and a community health clinic. Martiato is employed full-time as a parent aide at the Fienberg-Fisher Elementary School.

Upon moving to Miami Beach, Gomez realized that she would have to learn about the schools in order to ensure that her daughter's needs would be met. She got involved with the Healthy Learners' Project, "almost at the ground level," soon after Fienberg-Fisher received the initial program grant. She remembers the initial meetings where parents voiced their fears and concerns. She was part of the core group of RAINMAKER parents who received the required 40 hours of training.

Gomez says that of her first tasks was to go door-to-door throughout the neighborhood with a

questionnaire, getting parents' opinions on how the community could be improved. "Knowing what I went through as a parent, I felt that if I could help just one other parent, that would be enough," she says now, in explaining why she decided to get involved in the project.

In her referral capacity, Gomez does all the footwork to link families with the area's social services, including visiting the agencies and letting them know the families' needs. She and the other parents who volunteer in the R.A.I.N. Room do intake interviews, make initial assessments, help parents set goals and make appropriate referrals for families, based on their needs. She believes that the Healthy Learners' Project has been instrumental in breaking down some of the barriers that exist for families in the community. "So many of the parents in the area have no legal status; they don't know the language; they're afraid to get help for their children. This program helps them realize that they're not alone."

She's aware that the illegal status of many families poses challenges for them, and for the schools as well. "They're the ones whose children don't come to school, whose children don't get to the doctor or have shoes. They may be living at the poverty level, even with both parents working. So they have to leave their children alone; they think there's no one to help them, or even to help their children with homework. We try to help them understand that what we're doing has nothing to do with immigration. If we can get them [connected] to the agencies that provide assistance, it can alleviate stress and frustration for many of them."

The word "empowerment" crops up frequently when Gomez and Martiato speak about the benefits of the Healthy Learners' Project. Martiato points out that the project addresses parents' desires to be involved in their children's schools and to have some say about what happens in their community. "I always felt that they needed a voice—with the legislature, with the Board of Education—but the authorities weren't paying attention. This is a poor community, and when you have no money, authorities don't listen. This project has given power to the Latino community. Before, if a landlord gave them an eviction notice, the parents didn't know their legal rights. Now they don't get mistreated. The authorities hear us when we speak."

Martiato says that the change in attitudes has resulted in better treatment of parents and in the creation of new programs to meet their needs. She names the HeadStart program at Fienberg-Fisher and the project's Homework Club as just two of the benefits that have been realized since the Healthy Learners' Project began. Her own involvement in the community and as a RAINMAKER parent makes the Homework Club especially advantageous. "I don't always have time to check my own kids' homework, so they go there for help; about 130 kids participate and the parents work closely with the teachers."

Gomez says that being involved as a RAINMAKER has boosted her self-esteem. "I know I count and can do something to control my own life," she says. She believes the community has become friendlier, because parents now have the opportunity to get to know one another. They also realize there's a place they can go where they won't feel belittled or fearful of the authorities. "It's like they know that there's support for them."

In describing her own sense of empowerment, Martiato mentions her interest in housing issues. Once threatened with eviction from her apartment, she was encouraged to file a lawsuit against the city to highlight the crisis in availability of affordable housing. Today, she is a recognized community leader, with a great deal of knowledge on the problems of the schools, parks, and housing developments. Until she began working full-time at the school, she was being considered for an internship in the Mayor's office. Martiato is currently involved in discussions with the Housing Authority to develop more low-income housing in the area. "It may take time," she says, "but they're beginning to pay attention."

When asked what advice she would give to people planning a new school-linked community program, Denise Gomez says she'd stress the importance of creating an environment that minimizes the awe parents feel for the schools. That awe often prevents them from approaching the schools with questions or concerns about their children. An on-site program like the Healthy Learners' Project can let parents know they're welcome and make the schools feel more accessible. Gomez also recognizes that schools may initially feel threatened by a program that encourages parental involvement; programs must make sure to keep lines of communication open at every step in the process, in order to reassure the school that the program and the parents who get involved are there to serve the needs of the school and its teachers.

Teresa Martiato, asked the same question, says that she'd encourage a program to focus initially on engaging the interest and participation of those parents who are already actively volunteering in the schools. She suggests a low-key approach that doesn't insist on parental involvement because even if you reassure them that they have nothing to fear from the authorities, some parents will be initially reluctant. "Let them stay where they are," says Martiato, "because eventually more parents are going to want to be involved than you anticipated."

Both women are convinced of the value of Healthy Learners'. In fact, Denise Gomez says that if she has to move to a new area when her daughter enters middle school, she'll "implement a [parent involvement] program myself." And Teresa Martiato says that a supportive program like this can help preserve families by alleviating some of the stress of being poor. That, she says, is a "stress that can break families apart."

"One of Denise Gomez' first tasks was to go door-to-door throughout the neighborhood with a questionnaire getting parents' opinions on how the community could be improved."

PARENT INVOLVEMENT: Does It Matter?

by Bette Wilson and Patricia Maunsell

Read the following list of activities orginating at one high school, and consider who could be responsible. Who:

- Lobbied the Liquor Commissioner to deny issuance of a liquor license for a business near a high school?

- Conducted a seminar on steroids for the Physical Education Department?

- Testified before state senators and the mayor at a forum on school financing?

- Conducted a teacher and staff appreciation breakfast?

- Sponsored a Student Wellness Fair which included important information about HIV/AIDS?

- Prepared and distributed bilingual Spanish-English information on parent involvement in schools and children's education?

The work of a well staffed, energetic suburban principal with time and resources to provide the very best for her students? No. These activities and **many** more are the work of a parent, Joyce Ferguson, and the hundreds of active members of the Parent, Teacher, Student Association located at Morgan Park High School on the notorious west side of Chicago.

We can no longer just pay lip service to one of the most significant members of the partnership for improved education and better outcomes for our children and our society—PARENTS (or their designees). Dauber and Epstein write: "Schools' programs and teachers' practices to involve parents have important positive effects on parents' abilities to help their children across the grades; on parents' ratings of teachers' skills and teaching quality; on teachers' opinions about parents' abilities to help their children with schoolwork at home, on students' attitudes about school, homework, and the similarity of their school and family; and on students' reading achievement." (Dauber, S.L. & Epstein, J.L., 1993)

University of Illinois researcher Herbert Walberg (1984) reviewed twenty-nine controlled studies on school-parent programs and found that family participation in education was twice as predictive of academic learning as family socioeconomic status. Walberg also found that some parent involvement programs had effects ten times as large as socioeconomic status and benefitted both older and younger students.

James Comer, a leader in the field of school reform, found that long-term educational achievement and a reduction of attendance, discipline, and behavior problems were attained by getting parents more involved in the schools. He reported in his article, "Educating Poor Minority Children" for *Scientific American:*

"From our experience during the first difficult year it was obvious that we would make no progress until we had reduced the destructive interactions among parents, teachers and administrators and given cohesiveness and direction to the schools' management and teaching. . .The students had once ranked lowest in achievement among the 33 elementary schools in the city, but by 1979, without any change in the socio-economic makeup of the schools, students in the fourth grade had caught up to their grade level. By 1984 pupils in the fourth grade in the two (Comer) schools ranked third and fourth highest on the Iowa Test of Basic Skills. By the

1980s attendance rates at King, a Comer school, was either first or second in the city. There have been no serious behavior problems at either school in more than a decade."

University and other formal studies prove what is really common sense. As Leslie Brown, principal of Joyce Elementary in Detroit, says, "There is no success in school without parents. Parents have had the children longer and know them better. If schools are to achieve their goals, parents and children have to be on the same page."

The evidence demonstrates that when parents are involved in their children's schooling, children do better and their schools are better. If we are truly concerned about raising the achievement of all our children and enriching the quality of life for them, their families, and their communities, we need to take a fresh look at the relations between families and schools.

For our purposes here, "parents" are those persons who have legal or quasi-legal guardianship. They may be biological, adoptive, or foster parents, or family members whose involvement is significant to the child. As Don Davies, President of the Institute for Responsive Education states, "Parent is too narrow a term, when the most significant adults in the lives of many children may be grandparents, aunts and uncles, brothers and sisters, or even neighbors who provide child care."

No wonder that many well-intentioned educators feel perplexed about what active parent involvement means for schools. The dynamics of today's families have made it harder for parents to get involved. For example, single-parent families, impoverished and homeless families, households where both parents work, and families for whom English is a second language have all increased in the last decade. The traditional nuclear family is no longer the dominant norm. Clearly, parent involvement/education programs must change because the world is changing. Strategies needed to build an effective parent involvement program must recognize the unique needs and rich resources of the modern family.
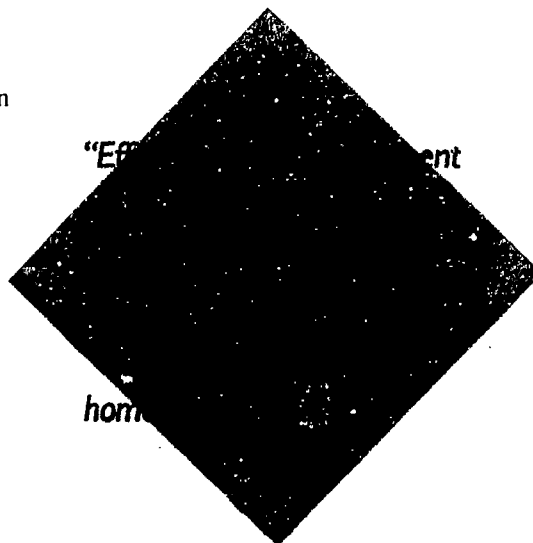
One argument used against setting up parent involvement programs claims that administrators and teachers are too busy and that they view parents as intruders. Initially, it may take a bit of time to call parents and make them feel welcome at the school, but the results are more than worth the time it takes!

First and foremost, as the research shows, children benefit tremendously by having their parents involved in their education and their schools. Secondly, schools and teachers benefit greatly. Joyce Ferguson and her Parent, Teacher, Student Association are an integral part of the Morgan Park school day. Parents provide administrative support to teachers and staff, typing student materials, copying, filing, answering phones, tutoring and monitoring standardized tests. Their support furnishes teachers with valuable time to develop creative lesson plans and to assist students who need additional help.

Yvonne Womack, principal of Edward White School in Chicago, found that her teachers *wanted* the support of parents and, with staff development on how to make the most of their help, have involved parents in many exciting ways. Ms. Womack asked her staff "What is something that would help you do your job?" A majority of the teachers responded that they needed more parental responsibility/involvement. At a staff development session, teachers were encouraged to invite parents to attend a special event in their child's classroom. One of Ms. Womack's teachers invited all the parents to attend a Black History program in which each child acted out a famous African American — and many parents came. At the program, the teacher had a chance to speak to the parents about any special talents they had to offer. The teacher now has a cadre of parents who help her and the students in a variety of ways.

Effective parent involvement programs must go beyond just asking parents to read to their children or help them with homework. Parent involvement must be viewed through a lens that includes programs that deal with parents' ability to access needed services and information about parenting skills, school procedures, curricula, and school governance. Parent involvement programs should always keep in mind the invaluable information and expertise that parents bring to the education process.

Comprehensive training programs can provide some skills important to building relationships between parents and schools. However, the most important quisite for strengthening the family-

school partnership is determination and concern for parents. Ensuring the sustained, systemic impact of these programs is crucial for effective parental involvement to yield academic and social dividends. Assisting parents in the process of empowering themselves will pay off for children, parents, and communities. It is probably one of the most cost-effective investments the educational establishment could make given what we spend on educational and social remedies.

"I want to but I don't know how," is often the sentiment expressed by parents, teachers, and administrators when someone suggests they develop a mear'gful parent involvement program. Some steps are easy. The first step may be communicating to parents that their involvement is desired. According to the Center for Research on Effective Schooling for Disadvantaged Students, "Most inner-city parents will work with their children on schoolwork if they understand that's what teachers expect them to do." Joyce Epstein and Susan He...ck found that "Teachers can take greater advantage of inner-city parents' interest and willingness to help if they inform parents that they are expected to talk about homework with their children, design homework that requires student-parent interaction, and inform students when and how to interact with parents on homework." One teacher assigned her high school students to interview their parents on pop culture (music, movies, fashion) during their high school years. This enabled all parents to be "experts" while preparing students for a discussion about cultural history.

Parent involvement programs differ among the schools, teachers and parents participating in them, but here are a few interesting models:

- **Homework Without Tears:** Parents work together to develop nonthreatening ways to help their children with homework and to help out in the school.

GOTCHA!
North Middle School in Alton, Illinois uses an activity called "Catching them Doing Something Good" to elevate students' self-esteem. Names of students "caught" are submitted to the principal weekly. On Friday, the week's winners have a pizza lunch with the principal.

- **Parents Only Meetings:** In the process of developing a school improvement plan, one principal realized that, while parents attended the meetings, they did not participate. Parents Only meetings provided an environment where parents could discuss issues freely and ask questions without feeling their questions were too basic.

- **Gang Prevention and Drug Prevention Programs:** Parents learn about gang and drug activities in their communities and receive specific suggestions about how to prevent and recognize the early signs of problems.

- **Family Learning Resource Programs:** Parents receive their GED and develop parenting skills to increase their individual capacities to assist their children.

The research has shown that "the form of parent involvement does not seem to be critical, so long as it is reasonably well-planned, comprehensive and long-lasting." (Henderson, 1981) While it will take staff time to get the parent involvement ball rolling, such programs have been proven to lead to success in the classroom. But more importantly, they lead to confident, successful children who are ready to take on the demands of our complex society.

References

WALBERG, H.J. (1984). Improving the productivity of America's schools. *Educational Leadership* 41, 19-27.

COMER, J.P. (1988). Educating poor minority children. *Scientific American*, 259, 42-48.

DAUBER, S.L. & EPSTEIN, J.L. (1993). Parents' attitudes and practices of involvement in inner-city elementary and middle schools. In *Families and Schools in a Pluralistic Society*, N.F. Chavkin, ed. Albany, NY: SUNY.

HENDERSON, A. (1987) The evidence continues to grow: Parent involvement improves student achievement. (Columbia, MD: National Committee for Citizens in Education.)

Bette Wilson, M.A. is coordinator of the National Resource Center for Family Support Programs' School-Linked Services Division. A teacher for over 30 years, she has also served as a liaison between a school district and its community; as an educational consultant to the Illinois State Board of Education; and as codirector of North Central Regional Educational Laboratory's Academy for Urban School Leaders.

Patricia Maunsell, formerly of Children's Defense Fund, holds an M.A. in Education and Social Policy from Northwestern University and currently works on curriculum development and program and policy research for the Family Resource Coalition. Both can be reached by calling the Family Resource Coalition: 312/341-0900.

POLICY

Developing Family and Community Involvement Policies:
Guidelines for School Districts

by Nancy Feyl Chavkin

Crises in our schools and communities have caused leaders from diverse fields to "join forces" in the reform movement. Levy and Copple call this "a propitious 'ime for collaboration because education and human services face common challenges as they try to help the same people and respond to the same problems."[1] The Council of Chief State School Officers says "the time is ripe" for "comprehensive family support, education and involvement efforts," and the National Coalition for an Urban Children's Agenda is asking schools and communities to define "desirable outcomes for children" because its ten members are deeply concerned about the plight of urban children and families.[2]

A recurrent theme in all three reports is that school districts cannot solve the problems of today's students alone. They must learn to collaborate with families and communities. A districtwide initiative in family and community involvement is a complex issue, and recent research can help school districts understand what policies are needed to ensure the success of these initiatives.

The Need for Policy

A study conducted by the Southwest Educational Development Laboratory used a key-informant approach to identify and describe the essential elements of promising family and community involvement programs in five southwestern states. These essential elements began with two key components: written policies and administrative support for family involvement. The other elements all fit under the general umbrella of ways school districts helped support educators working with families. These additional elements included: training for staff and families; a partnership approach in every aspect of programming; two-way communication; networking within and outside the district; and evaluation. In each case,

the school board set the official district policy on family and community involvement and then provided administrative support for policy implementation. Individual schools in the district developed their own strategies for implementation with support from the central office as necessary.[3]

The Institute for Responsive Education's research points out that because school districts have unique features which make them resistant to change, policies about family and community involvement are necessary. The goals of schools as organizations are diverse; the method of goal achievement is fragmented and responsibility is diffused among administrators, counselors, teachers, families, and students. In addition, the informal norms of schools are powerful, and the formal structure is complicated and not always well-coordinated. These organizational realities make the idea of family involvement in education an idea that is difficult both to introduce and to maintain without a formal, written policy. Davies suggests that a mandate for family involvement is essential. His work and studies by the Institute for Responsive Education clearly show that policy is a critical element if the natural organizational resistance to change is to be overcome.[4]

The National Coalition for Parent Involvement in Education (NCPIE) is dedicated to the development of family/school partnerships. This group of organizations used their broad and diverse experiences in working with teachers, administrators, families, and community leaders to develop general policy suggestions. Assuming that all family involvement policies are developed with input from teachers, administrators, families, students, people from youth-serving groups, and the community, NCPIE suggests that all policies should contain the following concepts:

- Opportunities for all families to become informed about how the family involvement program will be designed and carried out

- Participation of families who lack literacy skills or who do not speak English

- Regular information for families about their child's participation and progress in specific educational programs and the objectives of those programs

- Opportunities for families to assist in the instructional pr   s at school and at home

- Professional development for teachers and staff to enhance their effectiveness with families

- Linkages with social service agencies and community groups to address key family and community issues

- Involvement of families of children at all ages and grade levels

- Recognition of diverse famil structures, circumstances and respⱼↄsibilities, including differences that might impede family participation. (The person(s) responsible for a child may not be the child's biological parent(s) and policies and programs should include participation by all persons interested in the child's educational progress.)[5]

Support for Policy

But policies alone are not enough. Policies only provide the framework; policies need to be supported by mechanisms for monitoring, enforcing, and providing technical assistance. District support for family and community involvement must occur during three critical stages. These stages are: 1) the development stage; 2) the implementa-

tion stage; and 3.) the maintenance stage. Each of these stages is critical to ensuring the effectiveness of policy about family and community involvement; and support for policy needs to be considered during all three stages. Support is what helps a policy come into formal existence (development), what helps a policy translate into practical actions (implementation), and what helps us maintain the policy (maintenance).

Based on information from actual programs, the National Coalition for Parent Involvement in Education and the National School Boards Association both recommend several supports for policies for involving families in school activities during the development phase. These begin with assessing family needs and interests about ways of working with the schools and setting clear and measurable goals with family and community input. During this first stage, school districts must understand what a true partnership means. School districts need to see families and community members as equal partners and seek their input in developing a vision of their district's ideal family involvement program. Districts need to take the leadership role and reach out into communities and actively seek the involvement of families and community. [6]

Once a policy is adopted, school districts need to successfully implement it. NCPIE's keys to success at the implementation stage include a variety of strategies. Some suggestions that have worked for districts include the following:

- Hire and train a parent liaison to directly contact families and coordinate parent activities. If there is a non-English-speaking community, the liaison should be bilingual and sensitive to the needs of all families in the community.

- Develop public relations to inform families, businesses, and the community about parent involvement policies and programs through newsletters, slide shows, videotapes, local newspapers, and such.

- Recognize the importance of a community's historic, ethnic, linguistic. or cultural resources in generating interest in parent participation. Even when there are problems, such as desegregation issues, a parent involvement program can serve as a forum for discussion and a conduit for change.

- Use creative forms of communication between educators and families. This

may include parent/teacher conferences which yield individual parent/child and teacher/child plans, newsletters mailed to families, etc.

- Mobilize families as volunteers in the school assisting teachers with instructional tasks, assisting in the lunchroom, and helping with administrative office functions. Families might act as volunteer tutors, classroom aides, and invited speakers.

- Train educators to include techniques for surmounting barriers between families and schools so that teachers, administrators, and families act as partners. [7]

The maintenance stage, which follows the coming together of the partnership and the establishment of an official group, focuses on working together with all partners. The work of supporting policies about family and community involvement continues after policies are developed and implemented. In fact, most partnerships report that very difficult challenges arise during the maintenance stage.

To enhance the success of policies during the maintenance stage, NCPIE makes the following three recommendations. First, integrate information and assistance with other aspects of the total learning environment. Families should have access to information about such services as healthcare and nutrition

WHY NOT HOST A GRANDPARENTS' DAY?
Since senior citizens provide more that 50 percent of the tax dollars that support schools, it is important for educators to reach out to them, keep them informed, and include them in school activities. How about planning a seniors' day at your school? Invite your legislators and ask them to prepare a summary of state and national senior-citizen legislation with a brief explanation of what these mean for your community's seniors. Build in time for questions and answers.

programs provided by schools or community agencies. Second, schedule programs and activities flexibly to reach diverse family groups. Third, monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of family involvement programs and activities on a regular basis. [8]

Critical Policy Issues

Any discussion of districtwide policy must include consideration of three critical issues: budget/resource allocations, assessment of outcomes, and the collaboration process.

All districtwide reform efforts cost some money and the perennial question is: Where will the money come from? As the authors of *Principals Speak* write, the answer can be found in the word priorities. [9] Our schools, even in times of high expenditures, have not spent very much money on family and community involvement. If we really believe family and community involvement are linked to student success, we must stop giving lip service to partnerships and allocate modest sums for staff development, outreach, and coordination activities.

Of course, some of the goals of family and community involvement can be accomplished without new district dollars; resource reallocation can help. Schools can reassign teachers and staff. They can use existing staff development time for training on family and community involvement. Schools also can seek additional funding from local businesses, foundations, and community groups.

State and federal funding are other possible sources of support. One promising place to look for funding is federal Chapter 1. Districts might review their priorities for the use of Chapter 1 funds and see whether continuing to spend these funds on remedial instruction is in the best interest of students. This money might be used more productively if invested in mobilizing home-school-community resources to help children. The recent U.S. Department of Education's publication on flexibility in using Chapter 1 funds supports this idea. [10] In addition, school districts should consider other special funding sources, including special education funds, drug education funds, funds for at-risk youth, and dropout prevention funds.

In order to obtain budget/resource allocations for family and community involvement, it is important to be clear about the outcomes of these activities—to specify measurable goals, and to delineate the procedure for determining when goals have been reached. Describe the expected outcomes. Look beyond inputs (who was served, what services

were provided) and move toward examining outcomes. Districts might consider health and wellbeing, development, decrease in deviant behavior, and satisfaction as possible outcomes. Defining outcomes for partnership programs is a difficult process because they combine the elements of education, social service, and community activities. Nevertheless, defining outcomes is critical to the success of family-school partnerships.

After defining outcomes, districts must measure them. Palanki and Burch suggest seven ways districts can evaluate whether their policies related to families and communities are effective. They suggest policies need to be evaluated by looking at flexibility, intensity, continuity, universality, participation, coordination, and comprehensiveness.[11]

To measure outcomes of these types of practices, assessment methods will need to change. Most of the current assessments used by districts measure inputs rather than outputs. Assessments in current family and community involvement programs typically count how many people attended instead of measuring the quality of their interactions with the school. But quality is at least as important as quantity. Some districts are now incorporating assessment about family and community involvement in the annual performance reviews of both teachers and administrators. Changes in attitudes and perceptions of both families and teachers should occur and be measurable. A "vignette" approach and other qualitative measurement techniques may work best and also provide the most insight for districts. Districts need to continue to develop accountability systems that accurately assess outcomes for collaboration and coordination activities.

Collaboration is also an important issue. Districts must work with all groups in a community to ensure that students and their families have access to needed health and social services, employment, food, and housing so that students come to school ready to learn. Determining how to make these services accessible—whether schools link students and their families to needed services or whether these services are provided at the school—will require new roles and commitments. Districts must be sensitive to racial, ethnic, and economic differences, as well as language and literacy obstacles because insensitivity inhibits both communication and collaboration. Too often this lack of sensitivity prevents effective interaction with families and the community.[12]

School district staff will have to learn to coordinate with staff in other systems. Districts will need to examine existing job descriptions and reward systems. Each school needs to have available a wide range of activities, service directories, and resource materials. Districts should consider locating some community services or community personnel in school buildings. They will want to hire school social workers and family-community coordinators to link families with the school and community services.

Whenever possible, districts need to work with nearby teacher training institutions to assure preservice training in family and community involvement and the collaboration process. Higher education institutions may also be able to provide districtwide in-service training that meets the needs of local teachers, community members, and families.

It is difficult to get collaborative programs underway. Each system has a different governance structure. Regulations and time schedules often conflict. Professional practices such as intake forms, budget cycles, confidentiality rules, and reimbursement plans are often contradictory and cause disagreements. These differences are not insurmountable, but school districts require time to work out these problems with other agencies. Collaborative programs can be successful when a district has a strong policy about family and community involvement and provides support for it.

Recommendations

Policy can set the direction by clarifying the definition of family and community involvement and setting priorities and guidelines for the various groups from home, school, and community. Policy alone is not enough: support for policy is critical for the development, implementation, and maintenance of districtwide family and community involvement. Districts will need to invest some resources: school boards need to consider new dollars and personnel and reallocation of existing dollars and staff. Most schools do not reach out to families and communities. For them to do so, a paradigm shift is required. Family and community involvement must be a districtwide effort backed by a strong policy and support for that policy during the development, implementation, and maintenance stages.

We must mobilize committed families, schools, and communities to work together to improve education. New or revised districtwide policies can marshal federal, state, and local resources to help schools work with families and communities. Clearly, change is within our reach. Districts can

and must examine the ways school district policies involve families and communities in education.

Notes

[1] LEVY, J.E. and COPPLE. C. (1989). *Joining Forces: A Report from the First Year* (Alexandria. VA: National Association of State Boards of Education).

[2] Council of Chief State School Officers (1989) *Family Support, Education and Involvement. A Guide for State Action* (Washington, DC: author).

[3] National Coalition for an Urban Children's Agenda. (1991). *Implementing the Children's Agenda: Critical Elements of System-wide Reform.* (Alexandria, VA: National Association of State Boards of Education).

[4] WILLIAMS. D.L., Jr. and CHAVKIN. N.F. (1990) Essential elements of strong parent involvement programs. *Educational Leadership. 47.* 18-20.

[5] DAVIES. D. (1987). Parent involvement in the public schools: Opportunities for administrators. *Education and Urban Society. 19.* 147-163.

[6] National Coalition for Parent Involvement in Education. *Parent Involvement. Pamphlet.*

[7] See National Coalition for Parent Involvement in Education *Parent Involvement* Pamphlet; and National School Board Association (1988) *First Teachers: Parent Involvement in the Public Schools.* (Alexandria, VA: author).

[8] National Coalition for Parent Involvement in Education. *Parent Involvement* Pamphlet

[9] SEELEY, D.S.. NIEMEYER. J.H., and GREENSPAN. R (1991). *Principals Speak. Report No. 2.* (Staten Island. NY: Principals Speak Project/CUNY).

[10] United States Department of Education (1992). *Chapter 1 Flexibility: A Guide to Opportunities in Local Projects* (Washington, DC: U. S. Department of Education.)

[11] PALANKI, A. and BURCH. P (with D. Davies) (1992). Mapping the policy landscape: What federal and state governments are doing to promote family-school-community partnerships. *Report No. 7.* (Baltimore, MD: Center on Families. Communities. Schools & Children's Learning. The Johns Hopkins University).

[12] MELAVILLE, A.I., and BLANK. M.J. (1993) *Together We Can: A Guide for Crafting a Profamily System of Education and Human Services* (Washington, DC: U. S. Government Printing Office).

Nancy Feyl Chavkin. Ph.D., ACSW. is associate professor of social work at the Richter Institute of Social Work. Southwest Texas State University. She is the editor or author of Families and Schools in a Pluralistic Society *(SUNY Press).* The Use of Research in Social Work *(Praeger Press).* Conversations with Louise Erdrich and Michael Dorris *(University Press of Mississippi) with A. Chavkin, and more than 25 articles on family, school, and community. Contact her at the Richter Institute, SWT. 601 University Drive. San Marcos, Texas 78666, 512/245-2592.*

PROFILES

Involving Low-Income, Multi-Ethnic Families in Children's Education:

Four Grantees of DeWitt-Wallace Reader's Digest Fund

by Christine Vogel

One of the most effective ways to expand the career and educational opportunities for youth, particularly those who are poor or minority, is to increase their parents' involvement in their education. But language barriers, disadvantaged backgrounds, or simple lack of knowledge about available services, make many parents reluctant to get involved, says Bruce Trachtenberg, Director of Communications for the DeWitt Wallace-Reader's Digest Fund.

To address this challenge, the DeWitt Wallace-Reader's Digest Fund established the School/Family Partnership Initiative in 1991. The Initiative assumes that:

* Parents have the right to participate in their children's education.

* Children's academic success depends upon cooperation among parents, schools, and community groups.

* Community service organizations can have an impact on the schools' commitment to family involvement in their children's education.

The Initiative provides support to regional and national nonprofit organizations that operate programs for minority families, especially low-income African-American, Asian, and Latino families whose children have special needs. Trachtenberg says that the grants target at-risk youth because they probably have most to lose without assistance from

their parents, and because research has shown that disadvantaged or first-generation parents are the ones least likely to take part in their children's education.

The four projects profiled below have received two- to three-year implementation grants. Each grantee has experience in promoting and developing school and family partnerships in ways that directly benefit families. These projects are expected to serve as models for other organizations that want to develop and implement more effective partnerships between schools and families.

◆

F.A.S.T. (Families Together with Schools)
Lynn McDonald
Project Director
Family Service America
Milwaukee, Wisconsin

F.A.S.T. is a collaboration between schools, non-profit mental health social services, education and assessment agencies for alcohol and drug abuse, and families. Originally called Families And Schools Together, F.A.S.T. has been in existence since 1988. It currently operates in schools in 13 states, and it is establishing sites throughout the country under the direction of Family Service America.

F.A.S.T. concentrates on family involvement and parental training. It

helps parents feel more comfortable in dealing with schools and other community resources. The program, which targets elementary-school children between the ages of five and nine, originates in the school, and serves as a bridge between the child's family and the community.

F.A.S.T. director Lynn McDonald credits the recruitment strategy with much of the program's success. "Parents don't always want to hear—or agree—about a problem related to their children. We want to maximize their ability to hear the news and teach them how to incorporate it and respond appropriately."

Each program is run by a trained and coordinated team consisting of a parent graduate of the program, a school representative (teacher or social worker or Chapter I coordinator) and representatives from two community-based organizations (such as mental health or substance abuse). After the school identifies the at-risk children, the school representative approaches the parents to ask if a community based home/school liaison and a F.A.S.T. parent graduate can visit their home and invite their voluntary participation. Visitors are matched with families, according to gender, socioeconomic class, and racial or ethnic group of the primary parent. McDonald believes that such a culturally responsive approach is critical to initially engaging the parents.

The heart of the program is an eight-week series of family meetings. Designed to encourage fun, positively alter

parent-child interactions, empower parents and build parent support groups, each program usually brings together about 12 families at a time. Each week's program includes a regular meal, at which the families eat together as units; communication exercises; feeling identification exercises; an uninterrupted period of parent-child quality time; a parent support meeting; and closing activities designed to reinforce family ties and provide positive alternatives to using drugs and alcohol. Attendance is voluntary; a weekly lottery helps reinforce attendance.

A series of monthly meetings over a two-year period follows this structured training period. These meetings are run by parent graduates with staff assistance. Lynn McDonald stresses the importance of this follow-up support. She believes it empowers parents to continue making use of experts who can help them achieve their goals. She points to a group of parents who set up a citizenship training course and of another group which used their new sense of empowerment to remove an abusive principal and pass a previously defeated school referendum.

McDonald says that too often, school personnel think that parents aren't motivated. "But it's more that they're marginalized or under stress. Many are single moms raising children. Schools want to educate them; but they need something else. You don't have to be literate to support your child. When parents realize that and feel that the school backs them, then they'll get involved in education."

◆

APEX (ASPIRA Parents for Educational Excellence)
Providence Rodriguez-Floresca
Project Director
The ASPIRA Association, Inc.
Washington, D.C.

ASPIRA Association, the only national Latino youth organization in the country, has served and advocated on behalf of Latino and Puerto Rican youth and their families for more than 30 years. The APEX Initiative unifies ASPIRA'S efforts to build family and school

partnerships and to develop community leaders. It trains parents to formulate ways to improve education in their own communities and to mobilize other parents to join in those efforts. APEX trains Latino parents to become effective advocates for their children at home and in the school by sponsoring a training academy for parent leaders and offering ongoing support and technical assistance to parents. It provides them with information about resources available at local, state, and federal levels. The program has produced two training manuals, available in Spanish and English: *The APEX Workshop Series Manual* and *Organizing and Working with Parent Groups: A Manual for APEX Facilitators.* APEX also conducts ongoing evaluation and has designed a survey to assess outcomes.

Over the course of the three-year grant period, APEX hopes to work with at least 270 parents from two ASPIRA sites in Philadelphia and Chicago. In addition to helping parents assist their children and work with their teachers and schools, APEX wants to develop their leadership ability. It wants to create at least 30 parent trainers. And APEX is encouraging parents to build networks within the Latino community beyond the APEX program scope.

Project director Providence Rodriguez-Floresca notes that the initial recruiting, which stressed one-on-one outreach and home visits, was a key to the program's success because it brought the APEX counselors close to the families. "They're now considered close friends and a part of the extended Latino family; that's been very important."

The program (which was developed with parent feedback) consists of a series of eight leadership training workshops, each for a maximum of ten parents. These workshops include a great deal of participant interaction and role-plays and are conducted in Spanish by a Latino facilitator. The scenarios and idioms employed in the workshop presentations reflect the norms of the Latino culture, right down to the terms of endearment a Latino mother might use when speaking with her adolescent son. Workshops inform parents of the importance and dimensions of their rights vis a vis involvement in their children's education and they encourage parents to form

groups to address ongoing educational issues which affect their children and community.

Rodriguez-Floresca acknowledges a number of challenges. One is the need to find a balance between running the APEX program itself and addressing the families' many other needs. Another challenge is the traditional attitude of Latino parents. "They tend not to question a school's authority and they believe that schools basically know what is educationally best for their children. Schools have primarily contacted them when there's a problem. So many can't believe they could contribute to a general parent meeting." Schools themselves can pose a challenge: they are not used to dealing with a previously uninvolved group of parents who suddenly know their rights.

This past summer, 63 parents from Chicago and Philadelphia graduated from the APEX program, 13 more than the first-year goal. And they've gotten actively involved in the schools. Parents in Philadelphia, recognizing that the acquisition of skills will increase their self-esteem and their ability to play active roles in the schools, are taking ESL classes, GED classes, and computer education classes. In Chicago, eight APEX graduates won seats on local school councils and four were elected to the Bilingual Committee of their local elementary school. One parent, who lost by a single vote, asked for a recount. "And in the beginning," says Rodriguez-Floresca, "just to get these parents to say their names was a big deal!"

◆

Spirit of Excellence Parent Empowerment Project
Claudia Thorne
Project Director
National Black Child Development Institute, Inc.
Washington, D.C.

This small-scale demonstration project helps poverty-level African American parents of young children to develop life skills that will increase their satisfaction with their own lives and to develop more effective parenting skills so that their children will be ready for preschool.

The Spirit of Excellence Project was launched in the Anacostia community of Washington, D.C., a neighborhood whose demographics parallel those of South Central Los Angeles and the South Bronx. Geographically isolated, it has a high rate of infant mortality, as well as high levels of unemployment, substance abuse, crime, inadequate housing and low educational achievement. Many of the parents are single African American women who are struggling to survive.

The project aims to create an environment for success by helping parents establish and clarify goals and objectives, and also to identify and utilize resources such as education, training, employment and social supports. Participants are either non-working and welfare-dependent or employed in low-income jobs. Project facilitators form relationships with each parent, and volunteer mentors (NBCDI members and affiliates) serve as advocates and informal supports for each parent and child. Mentors are matched with parents according to interests, personalities, and similar experiences.

Forty parents are expected to participate in the project over a two-year period. There are currently two project sites, with a third to be selected soon. Parenting classes and training sessions take place in a nearby community center which is within walking distance for all participants. Project Director Claudia Thorne reports that this community-based location has been crucial in getting parents involved.

She also reports that parents have just completed the first six-week block of the program's ten-part curriculum. The subject areas, developed on the basis of the parents' expressed needs, include: establishing career objectives; health; finances; home and life skills; African American culture; spirituality; parenting skills; community issues; and crime and violence. Meetings open with prayers and include exercises to promote bonding among the participants and a presentation by the group facilitator. The parents engage in a role-playing exercises and are encouraged to keep personal journals. They receive a small incentive for participating in each component. A luncheon is held at the completion of each six-week segment. While Thorne hopes that parents will

stay committed for the duration of the project, she does not emphasize the overall time frame, because "two years is like a lifetime to these parents."

Thorne says that recruiting participants was a real challenge for the project. Originally, hospitals and community social service agencies referred families, but those organizations tended to refer families in crisis who lacked the relative stability necessary for long-term commitment to the project. Recognizing the problem, Thorne says the project changed its tack and began to recruit participants directly off the streets. "We stood by laundry rooms and high-traffic locations, handing out flyers to anyone who walked by and met the parents face-to-face. Those who came [to the meetings] began to bring other parents."

Thorne measures early success by the fact that parents attend the meetings regularly. "Their self-esteem is growing and they're beginning to think about strategies for themselves," she says, using the example of a parent who applied for a work internship after completing the career segment. "I coached her on things like anticipating potential interview questions, making eye contact, and writing a follow-up thank-you note— and she got the internship."

UNDIVIDED ATTENTION
Spending time alone with individual children heightens the child's feeling of importance and boosts self-esteem. Parents, especially single parents with more than one child, may find it difficult to find the time.

Try this: Establish a reciprocal relationship with a neighbor that allows each of you to spend time with an individual child. For example, how about a dinner swap? Offer to prepare a simple meal for both families. While your neighbor is watching the other kids, you and the designated child could shop and cook. Next time it's your neighbor and one of her children's turn to make dinner.

The project hopes to develop parents' skills to the point where they can begin teaching the classes. "One of the parents already taught a section about communication skills on the job. As a member of their community, she made a much greater impact than the facilitator could have," says Thorne.

Thorne regards flexibility as important to the project. Demonstration projects must be able to modify their programs to take advantage of community resources and to meet situations that arise. The Spirit of Excellence Project is already exploring how to bring GED training to the community. "It wasn't part of our original plan, but we realize there's a real need," says Thorne. "If we know the women will walk across the street to take a class, we want to make that available."

———————◆———————

The National Asian Family/ School Partnership Project
Bouy Te
Project Director
National Coalition of Advocates for Students (NCAS)
Boston, Massachusetts

This three-year project was launched in September 1992, under the auspices of NCAS, a national network of 23 child advocacy groups in 14 states. The project aims to identify, develop, and determine the effectiveness of strategies geared toward Asian family/school partnerships; to support the school success of Asian students by providing assistance to schools and agencies that serve Asian families; and to share its findings with other communities interested in developing stronger ties between Asian parents and the schools. It is the first Asian national network charged with helping to realize the vision of Asian partnerships among parents, schools and communities.

Minneapolis, Philadelphia, and Chicago were initially selected for project implementation; Des Moines, San Diego, and Seattle have been added during the second year of the project. The six cities represent a number of distinct groups from Laos, Cambodia,

Vietnam, and the Philippines. Each city has one or two sites, each of which currently serves up to 100 families. Approximately 90 percent of the participants are first-generation immigrants, who have been in the U.S. less than five years. Participants were recruited with the help of the schools and the agencies which serve Asian families in those communities.

After sites were chosen, letters were sent out to community leaders in the Asian neighborhoods. Acting as recruiters, they relayed information about the new program to potential participants.

Meetings take place at the local school or community agency. While the community leaders set the agendas for the initial meetings, parents have taken responsibility for scheduling subsequent meetings and setting the agendas. Meetings are led by a native-speaking facilitator. Project staff follow up with phone calls to encourage repeat attendance and the program provides trar portation and encourages parents to bring their children to the meetings. Although targeted to specific Asian communities, the project also reaches out to the community-at-large. In Minneapolis, which serves a Hmong community, regular open meetings, facilitated by a bilingual representative from the area community agency. are held for all interested parents in the area.

The project's immediate tasks involve breaking down the communication barriers that exist between parents and schools by helping parents understand what the school and its programs are all about. "Many of these parents don't know anything about the schools, and are in need of School Orientation 101." says Buoy Te, project director, adding that language poses a real problem. "Many don't yet s₁ˑak the language; others may speak some English, but can't read it.

They need to have most things translated. When a school sends home a notice inviting them to an open house, parents have no idea what that means. The school assumes they do."

Bouy Te emphasizes that developing cultural sensitivity has been an important component in working with this project. "One of our first meetings in San Diego, which serves a Laotian community, was held on a Saturday afternoon, and only 30 parents showed up. We found that weekend time is very important to the families. Since many of the parents don't work, they are more available on weekdays. So programs held during the week have drawn many more participants."

Te observes that different value structures also present roadblocks as the parents begin to assert their rights. Schools are not always quick to respond to the needs of diverse populations. He mentions the case of a child who was suspended for misbehavior. The child's parent felt that a proper punishment would have required the student to work even harder to compensate for the

"Dr. Comer wanted to make sure I understood that the essence of his intervention is a process, not a package of materials, instructional methods, or techniques. 'It is the creation of a sense of community and direction for parents, school staff, and students alike.'"
—Schorr, L. B. (1988). *Within Our Reach: Breaking the Cycle of Disadvantage*. New York: Doubleday.

misbehavior. A group of parents went in to speak with school officials, yet nothing changed. Because Te has been working to convince parents that they must take responsibility if they want change to take place for their children, he sees the parents' meeting with the school as a sign of success. "Before, the parents would only listen; now they're also willing to speak out. This is a long-term effort; our goals are for parents to participate in the parent-teacher organizations and run for the school board."

He says that the National Asian Family/School Partnership Project receives technical assistance and resource materials from other projects sponsored by NCAS. To further encourage cooperation, several representatives from each project site around the country will be meeting in January 1994, along with the NCAS advisory committee, to discuss the challenges they've confronted and the strategies they've developed with their parent groups.

The DeWitt Wallace-Reader's Digest Fund School/Family Partnership Initiative recently awarded a second round of grants. Recipients include: the National Parent Network of Disabilities; the National Urban League's project on Parent Councils; and The Right Question Project at Suffolk University in Boston. Bruce Trachtenberg observes that the area of collaborative parent/school projects is too new to have spawned much empirical research. He cites anecdotal information like the election of APEX parents to positions on the Chicago local school councils, but he says it's still too soon to assess long-term implications. "After all, we're talking about eventual academic success, and that's a long-term project."

Christine Vogel is staff writer for the Family Resource Coalition.

32

A Funder's Perspective on School-Linked Services

by Janet E. Levy

L ike policymakers and practitioners throughout the country, foundation officials more and more are acknowledging that isolated bits of activity cannot effectively alter the life circumstances and chances of millions of disadvantaged children.

What It Takes to Assure School Success

The decision by the trustees of the Danforth Foundation to adopt a formal emphasis on school-linked services—in our parlance, School-Family-Community Partnerships—is an excellent example of this evolving perspective.

Founded in 1927 as an education foundation, Danforth over its history moved from an emphasis on higher education to an emphasis on public elementary and secondary education. In 1990, the board of trustees conducted an in-depth assessment of current programs and priorities. Following that assessment, the trustees reaffirmed the Foundation's commitment to assuring children's success in school. But at the same time, they recognized that school success for many youngsters is jeopardized by a host of factors outside the classroom and the school building. Realizing the goal of school success for all youngsters of necessity must entail responding to those external factors, as well as developing more effective ways to help children learn in school.

While the Danforth Foundation accepted the imperative of addressing children's nonacademic needs and the responsibility of schools to help do that, it understood that schools could not do so in isolation. Resources external to the school — parents, community leaders, and human service agencies — would be needed as partners to help assure student success. Thus, as the Foundation onfigured its grantmaking priori-

ties, one of the three focus areas became School-Family-Community Partnerships.

Widening the Circle of Foundation Support

The Danforth Foundation is not alone in its interest in promoting the availability of comprehensive services for children, and in its nurturing of the specific link between schools and human service agencies.

One of the first foundation efforts in this area, begun in 1986, was the Urban Dropout Prevention Collaboratives initiative funded by the Ford Foundation. This program sought to make dropout prevention a central focus and priority of cities. Moreover, believing that students drop out for reasons both internal and external to the school, the initiative sought to engage not only schools, but also other parts of the community in tackling the issue. Similarly, well ahead of today's widespread philanthropic interest in school-linked services, the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation led the effort to bring health care to school sites.

In 1988, the Annie E. Casey Foundation seized the attention of other funders

and public officials with the launching of New Futures, an initiative that challenged medium-sized cities to simultaneously pursue three related goals: increasing the number of youth graduating from high school; decreasing the incidence of teen pregnancy and parenting; and decreasing the rate of youth unemployment and inactivity. While the participating communities have learned how difficult it is to alter the target outcomes and to change institutions like schools, in each there is now much stronger public interest in children's issues and new structures to support cross-sector planning and action.

A particularly intriguing combination of public and philanthropic support for school-linked services has emerged in California, where 12 California-based foundations are working with the governor and state education, social service, health, and mental health officials on the new Healthy Start initiative. Healthy Start is intended to bring health care and social services to school sites. Over the next three years, the foundations are expected to contribute more than $5 million to the effort, which annually will involve $50 to $100 million in state and federal funds once it is operating fully.

Joining these foundations are a host of others at the local, regional, and national levels which are seeking through their grantmaking to bring together families and the institutions whose collective resources are needed to help children succeed. Notable at the national level are initiatives of the DeWitt Wallace-Reader's Digest Fund, the Pew Charitable Trusts, the W. W. Kellogg Foundation, and the Lilly Endowment; locally, community foundation leadership is key to multifaceted, long-term efforts emerging in Chicago and Hartford, for example.

Seeking Sustained Systemic Change

Perhaps as well as anyone, foundation officials understand the frustration of creating success that is short-lived. Again and again, they have watched the achievements of grantees dissipate, as grant funds disappear and projects are allowed to die. Related to that is the frustration of knowing that, no matter how successful and even long-term a particular project may be, the resources it commands are minuscule relative to the total expenditures for children's services and schooling.

In that frustration lies a likely explanation for today's strong interest among many grantmakers in approaching the area of school-linked services from a systems change perspective. Does a proposal include a plan for transition from grant funds to an ongoing funding source? Could a project design reasonably be replicated within the financial and technical capacities of a school and/or human service system? Is the prospective grantee seeking to "change the way business is done"—that is to increase the effectiveness of core operations—or simply to add a component that, while needed, will be unconnected to and consequently without effect on the much bigger pool of resources? Once, only a new idea could spark the interest of a foundation. Today, the innovative approach still has a good chance of capturing the imagination of a program officer, and so-called model programs are looked to as the evolving base of knowledge about how to improve children's well-being and achievement. But, in a growing number of foundations, just as likely to command attention is the effort that promises to implement a proven approach within mainstream institutions, preferably "at scale." for example, in an entire school district, throughout a major metropolitan area, or on a statewide basis. What counts is whether an effort will make a difference for children — not just for a few children who are the beneficiaries of a novel and richly-endowed demonstration project, but the millions of children who depend on basic institutions like schools and social service agencies.

Foundations as Collaborators

Thinking broadly about the needs of children also is prompting a change in the way business is done within the world of philanthropy. Foundations not only are promoting new linkages among child-serving institutions, but also themselves are entering new types of partnerships.

On the one hand, this is manifesting itself in more and much richer partnerships with the public sector. The California consortium discussed above is an excellent case in point, but there are many other examples to be found. For instance, Friends of the Family in Maryland, which oversees the state's well-known network of family resource centers, was the joint creation of the state and two local foundations. In Missouri, both local and national foundations recently joined four state agencies to form the Family Investment Trust, which will promote expanded programming that reflects the principles of the Caring Communities school-linked service initiative. In the past, the lines often were tightly drawn between what was regarded as government's responsibility and what philanthropy should address. Today, though, funders understand clearly that the public sector's resources for children greatly outweigh their own, and that forming partnerships to assure that those public resources are well spent may be among the most important contributions foundations can make.

Collaboration *among* funders also is more common today, a natural result of acknowledging the breadth of children's needs, which reach well beyond the fiscal capacity of even the largest foundation. Some of this collaboration

"Taken together, what is most interesting about the research is that it all points in the same direction. The form of parent involvement does not seem to be critical, so long as it is reasonably well-planned, comprehensive, and long-lasting."
—Henderson, A. (1981). *Parent participation-student achievement: The evidence grows.* Columbia, MD: National Committee for Citizens in Education.

arises when an enterprising grantee seeks and secures funds from multiple sources. But, more and more, collaboration among foundations is occuring at their own initiative, as they endeavor to coordinate grantmaking in order to maximize coverage of need and effectiveness of activity. A notable example of collaboration within the world of philanthropy is The Finance Project, a new effort to recommend changes in the way education and services are financed and governed so as to improve outcomes for children. The independent project was created by eight national foundations which recognized, through their own grantmaking as well as repeated observations by experts, that issues of finance confound even the most aggressive and creative efforts to reform systems serving children.

Doing the Hard Work

Undertaking the systems reform needed to assure that comprehensive supports and services are available to children and families is hard work. Foundations committed to improving outcomes for children through fundamental and deep-reaching changes in the institutions serving those children and their families increasingly recognize this in their grantmaking. They are receptive to requests for longer-term assistance than was previously the case. They are trying to assure that grantees have access to technical assistance and opportunities for networking. And, on occasion, they even are sitting at the table with grantees to help tackle hard issues.

That is not to say that foundation support is easily won or expectations easily met. But, it is to acknowledge a new environment, in which funders— like those who work in systems serving children and families—are stretching the boundaries which used to define their work. They are forming true partnerships with each other and with grantees in search of a common goal: the well-being and healthy development of our nation's children.

Janet E. Levy is a program director with the Danforth Foundation, responsible for grantmaking in the area of School-Family-Community Partnerships. Previously, she directed Joining Forces, a national initiative to promote and assist collaboration between schools and human service agencies.

Learning from Denver Family Resource Schools:
The Model and the Process

by Lucy Trujillo

The Model

The seven Denver Family Resource Schools (FRS) operate from the premise that children are likelier to succeed in school with a strong family and community supporting them. Unfortunately, many families and communities, particularly in urban areas, cannot by themselves provide the essential foundation for effective schooling. For this reason, Denver's Family Resource Schools focus on building the relationship between schools and communities and on strengthening the capacity of families and communities to support children's learning.

The Family Resource Schools provide the traditional, student-focused, academic support programs and non-traditional family-focused programs—like employment workshops, adult education, parenting classes, peer support groups and tutoring programs that involve parent participation. They aim to increase students' academic achievement through enriching the academic program and removing noneducational barriers to learning.

All Family Resource Schools have expanded their hours of operation, have developed summer programs, and have increased parent and community involvement. They also offer childcare.

Each school has a Collaborative Decision Making team (CDM) that makes all programming decisions. Each CDM includes representatives from the school (teachers, office, custodial, food service, principal), families, neighborhood, and businesses. They reach all decisions by consensus.

Although each CDM decides on its school's final program, the CDMs from all seven Family Resource Schools (FRS) have agreed to concentrate on the following five program areas in order to achieve their mission:

1. Student achievement and growth

2. Adult education and skill-building

3. Parent education

4. Family support services

5. Staff development and training

Actual programs and activities vary from school to school. One school coordinates family nights at the Denver Art Museum and Colorado Symphony; another implements a Family Math program; and yet another has cleared a piece of school land for a community garden. Each school feels pride in its accomplishments! And families are involved at every level from planning to execution of each activity.

Each school has an FRS site coordinator who works under the direct supervision of the principal. The site-coordinator implements and manages FRS programs and coordinates school, parent, and community outreach. The site coordinator functions as case manager, fundraiser, translator, instructor, clerk, financial manager, broker of resources, appointment scheduler, chauffeur, volunteer coordinator, and much, much more!

Project Development

Planning for the Family Resource Schools project began in the fall of 1989. It relied on both research ("Schools of the 21st Century" by Dr. Edward Ziegler, Yale University) and a successful school project already underway in Denver where one elementary school had been experimenting with site-based management and community partnerships for the delivery of services.

Representatives from the Denver Public Schools, the Mayor's Office, community organizations, and foundations worked together on the project planning team. In addition to drafting the concept paper and establishing the proposal process, the planning team borrowed a local corporate executive to develop fundraising strategies. They sent the request for proposals to all Denver public elementary school principals. Elementary schools were the focus for two reasons: first, all available research indicates that early efforts to improve children's lives pay greater dividends; second, elementary schools have close ties to neighborhoods and are within walking distance of the homes of most neighborhood residents. Thus community building efforts based at elementary schools are likelier to succeed.

The Denver planning team offered each school:

• Technical assistance to develop a plan to become a Family Resource School

• Assistance in negotiating collaborations with other agencies to bring additional services into the school

• Assistance in securing outside funding for new activities.

Copy the Process, Not the Model

Patricia Carpio, FRS Project Director, warns educators in other cities: "Don't take a program that has already been designed and just plop it down in front of staff and community. They might say "OK". But they won't have internalized the commitment it takes to make the program work. And that program might not be what they need." Instead, Carpio says," Copy the process.

"Start by creating a climate that is free of blame," Carpio suggests. "Too often, when children aren't learning what they need to learn, principals blame teachers, teachers blame parents, parents blame the school. Rather than look for someone to blame, they all need to prepare to make

changes—even drastic changes—that will improve the children's education. To work together, principals, teachers, and parents must assume each other's commitment to their common goal."

"Get a commitment to change from a group, even if it is a small group. The group needs to be representative of the community so its actions can have a ripple effect. It also needs to set its own direction so it has an investment in the process."

"Then design the programs, the means of change. Remember it requires no blame and a lot of determination."

The Role of the Principal

The principal of a school is a key person in the effort to bring a family-focused program to the school. Only minimal progress will be made unless the principal commits his/her support to the program. *Ultimately*, within the school system, the principal still is accountable for the safety and academic progress of the children. In addition, the principal continues to evaluate staff and meet with parents when conflicts arise.

The new program's planning and decisionmaking process requires that the principal share power with teachers and with parents. As a result, the principal's role becomes more problematic. Teachers or parents may challenge some of the principal's functions and the principal may feel threatened by some of their suggestions. All parties need to understand that the program cannot succeed unless the principal feels comfortable with it. A Family Resource School does not have to implement every new idea, but it must listen to new voices and new ideas.

The principal also serves a vital role in freeing up teachers to participate in meetings, training sessions, and special events while ensuring that the children do not suffer from the teachers' frequent classroom absences. On the other hand, as resources for a school are leveraged and children have many more opportunities to participate in many more excursions and special activities during the regular school day, teachers' classroom goals and objectives may suffer. The principal must create the proper balance for both staff and children.

The principal is also key in getting staff "buy-in." A Family Resource School experiences more nontraditional teacher-parent interaction (many parents drop in as casual classroom observers or volunteers) and increased work for office and custodial staff (busier phones, increased number of parents seeking assistance, more evening events requiring late night cleaning shifts). If these work demands irritate staff members and evoke a hostile response from them, the school environment will not be family-friendly. The principal can help prepare the staff for the changes and identify ways to handle the increased workload.

Parent Outreach

Parents also play a key role in implementation. If they don't participate, "family" is missing from the Family Resource School. When asked how she gets parents to participate in school functions, FRS site coordinator Tep Falcon says, "I remember back to my campaigning days. I was told a voter must see or hear the name of a candidate 28 times before they will remember it. It's the same with our activities: you can't just send a flyer home with a child two weeks before the event and expect family participation. You have to send the flyers, but you must also make phone calls, send reminders, make personal visits, get the children interested to let them know you want them there. That they are special. That they will be missed if they can't attend. There also has to be time for socializing and celebrating successes. All work and no play will definitely keep parents away."

Project Implementation

Successful implementation has a bottom line. No matter how good or how poor the model, key people have to want it to work and they have to be willing to put in a lot of 16-hour days.

Every person in the Family Resource School is vital to its success. It comes down to people: people who share a vision and are willing to put in the time, people who have high expectations but recognize the importance of celebrating small successes, and people willing to work *together* as a team to make a difference for children.

For more information, contact Lucy Trujillo, project coordinator, Family Resource Schools, 975 Grant Street, Denver, CO, 80203, 303/764-35' 7.

Core Components of the Family Resource Schools

Student Achievement and Growth:
Before-and after-school programs including:

- Community study halls with volunteer tutors
- Family read-alongs and family math classes
- Swimming lessons
- Guitar classes
- Community garden
- Cultural activities with the Denver Art Museum

Adult Education and Skill Building:
- Adult Basic Education (ABE)
- General Equivalency Diploma (GED)
- English as a Second Language (ESL)
- Spanish as a Second Language
- Conflict management
- Employment workshops
- Housing workshops for first-time buyers
- Weight Wise—health and nutrition programs

Parent Education:
- MELD program (Peer support group for young mothers)
- Weekly parent training programs
- Positive discipline workshops
- Sex education workshops
- Gang prevention workshops

Family Support Services:
- On-site case management
- Alcohol and drug prevention programs
- Before- and after-school childcare
- Childcare for all school programs and activities
- Baby-sitting co-ops
- Food and clothing banks
- Mental health services
- Women's support groups

Staff Development and Training:
- FRS orientation concept and philosophy
- The school community
- Parental involvement
- The culture of poverty
- Building teams
- Community resources
- Making referrals

New Partners in New York City:
School Reform through Intermediary Collaborations

by Michele Cahill and Norm Fruchter

During the 1980s concern about teenage pregnancy, school dropout, substance abuse, and juvenile delinquency spurred nationwide efforts to reduce risk-taking behaviors among youth. Schools, the central public institution in the lives of children and youth, often became the sites for these interventions, and countless schools added on social services, health clinics, and after-school educational and recreational programs targeted at specific youth problems.

Program experience, research, and evaluation suggest that while such efforts helped define the extent of unmet youth health and developmental needs, the single-problem focus resulted in fragmented services and a deficit-oriented service delivery pattern that failed to meet youth needs adequately. Many programs engaged youth in only very limited areas of their lives, or for too little time or with too few resources. Programs rarely managed to provide major supports for young people, to connect them effectively with such supports, or to begin to change those major institutions, such as schools, in which many youth experienced repeated failure.

Recognition of the limits of the single-problem focus has increased the demand to coordinate and integrate youth services. Evidence from some successful school/community programs has focused national discussion on how to promote more positive outcomes for youth. Program evaluations indicate that effective risk-prevention programs help young people form positive relationships with adults, master a skill, and contribute both to their own wellbeing and to the lives of their peers (Dryfoos, 1990). Effective risk-reduction programs value youths' family contexts, engage youth as central actors in their own lives, offer a continuum of supports, are responsive and flexible, and help youth build a broad range of skills and competencies. Successful programs begin to address both cognitive and social development and promote community-wide interventions involving families, peer groups, churches, community organizations, and schools. Such programs offer coordinated supports and work to engage schools, community organizations, families and youth themselves in efforts to ensure educational achievement and social development. This new approach challenges traditional youth services (and schools) to support educational success by broadening their modes of working with students, families, and community institutions.

The Council of Chief State School Officers recognized the importance of this challenge when in 1992, it adopted *Student Success Through Collaboration* as its priority. The Council reviewed its decade-long commitment to improving the quality of American public education, and called for new strategies that encompass "children's continuing intellectual, physical, emotional and social development, and well-being." Council policy asserts that educators must recognize that factors outside the education system affect the life chances of children and youth, and that schools and other social institutions rarely work together to respond to the multiple, interrelated needs of children and families. Therefore "educators must integrate efforts to support families and

"Most intermediaries...are non-bureaucratic organizations deeply committed to maximizing student development."

better meet the developmental needs of children and youth into efforts to restructure schools." Offering a vision of a new partnership among educators, families and communities, the council urged that currently operating partnerships be identified as models to operationalize that vision.
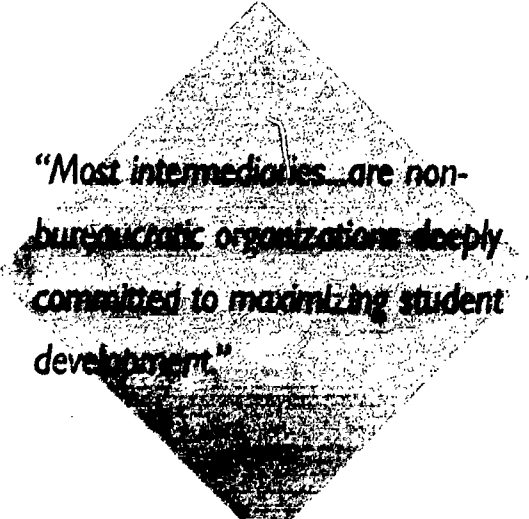
Such models now exist across a range of school/community partnerships. The following examples, drawn from recent New York City efforts, suggest the extent to which families, schools, and community institutions have successfully collaborated to support positive youth development.

Intermediaries in the New York City Schools

Since New York's fiscal crisis of the mid 1970s, thousands of external, non-profit organizations have offered classes, services, support, and assistance to students, their families, and the professionals who staff the city's public school system. The organizations are independent of the school system in which they provide services. During the pas two decades, such groups have provided increasingly important school and classroom offerings, from arts programming to science education, from literacy education and ESL for parents to psychiatric counseling for troubled students.

The following are several intermediaries currently at work within the New York City school system:

- The New York Academy of Medicine developed two curricula: *Growing Healthy* (for elementary-school students) and *Being Healthy* (for middle-school students) and provided the staff development assistance and support necessary for their successful implementation across the school system.

- Educators for Social Responsibility's *Resolving Conflict Creatively Program* provides a comprehensive conflict resolution curriculum to 250

elementary and middle schools. To implement that curriculum, ESR provides professional development, coaching, mentoring, periodic workshops and conferences, as well as follow-up support and assistance to teachers and students.

• Studio in a School operates in 150 schools, providing visual artists who transform classrooms into studios. All the schools' students cycle regularly through these classrooms, enriching students' experiences and increasing their teachers' skills.

• Educational Equity Concepts provides *Beginning Science Equitably*, a hands-on science exploration program for parents and school beginners, to encourage the development of science curriculum and exploration in elementary schools in seven community school districts.

• The Science Skills Center prepares central Brooklyn youngsters for Regents-level competency in biology, chemistry, physics, algebra, geometry, and calculus through before- and after-school intensive seminars and tutoring sessions.

• The Ackerman Institute for Family Therapy trains teachers and administrators in twelve school districts to work with students and their families to improve school-student-family relationships and which in turn contribute to a positive school climate and academic achievement.

These intermediaries share several key characteristics. All of them have independent nonprofit status; thin administrative structures, strong entrepreneurial drive, and, most important, a vision of how to contribute to the development of students' health, academic, social and emotional, vocational, and citizenship competencies.

Public school systems usually enforce tight modes of control that result in hierarchical, top-down, rule-bound, and procedurally-driven institutions. In these systems, processes are treated as more important than outcomes. Most intermediaries, in contrast, are small, "owner-run," non-bureaucratic organizations deeply committed to maximizing student development. When such intermediaries collaborate with school personnel, a variety of interactions result: new alliances, stimulating challenges,

innovations in classroom practice and school organization, releasing of new energies.

But these interactions can also create sharp conflicts, disputes about the value of the intervention, sometimes even ideological polarization. Such interactions can alter, sometimes decisively, the prevailing climate and set of relationships that shape school cultures and contribute to student academic performance and positive youth development.

Intermediaries are often run and staffed by highly skilled entrepreneurs whose styles, derived from their professional backgrounds in the arts, sciences or social services, differ from traditional norms of school culture. Such outsiders may also be more representative of the communities whose children attend public schools, and therefore more relevant as role models, than many school staff members.

Traditional modes of educational accountability can be quite stretched by this new pattern of intermediary provision. Most intermediaries operate through contracts with district or central offices of the NYC school system, and are therefore formally under school system authority and control. Yet intermediaries work directly with individual schools, in particular classrooms and with particular teachers. When collaboration breaks down or differences cannot be resolved in the classroom, administrators usually intervene to mediate. But if administrators fail to resolve them, conflicts are

"In summary, there is a large body of research which suggests that parent involvement can change attitudes and improve achievement, particularly if the parent involvement is comprehensive and long-lasting, and if it is begun at an early age. It seems that the particular form of parent involvement is not so critical as long as it is well-planned."
—Kagan, S. L. (1985). *Parent involvement research: A field in search of itself.* IRE Report no. 8 (Boston, MA: Institute for Responsive Education.)

often transferred upward to the district or central contracting authority, which will consult with the intermediary to resolve the issue. This move bypasses the normal chain of authority in which administrators, particularly the principal, can (and often do) wield autocratic power and maintain tight control. The resulting elasticity that intermediaries introduce into an often rigid authority structure expands the opportunities available for experimentation in meeting youth needs.

This major shift to working with outside intermediaries also generates innovative ways of meeting youth needs. Both Educational Video Center and Rise and Shine Productions, for example, develop and improve students' academic and analytical skills by helping students research and produce video documentaries. Both organizations are run by professionals who adapt media skills and techniques to teaching, guiding and encouraging student production. (The production of *New Youth Connections*, a citywide student newspaper, by high school students organized through Youth Communications Inc. is another pioneering example of the same trend.)

Involving outside intermediaries also utilizes specialization to meet youth needs. Consider the programs provided to schools by the Brooklyn and New York Botanic Gardens, the New York Hall of Science and the Brooklyn Center for the Urban Environment. Each organization has used its particular expertise to develop curricula, support classroom teachers, and design and implement specific programs to meet the science needs of New York City's school children. Given the school system's shrinking resources, the escalating numbers of professionals teaching science (and math) without a license, and the simultaneous disappearance of science laboratories, science equipment, and lab assistants in many of the city's schools, science education increasingly depends on securing help from such specialized intermediaries.

Broader Role for Intermediary Collaborations

Though many interventions initially focus on particular youth competencies, collaborations aimed at broad developmental youth outcomes are increasing within the New York City school system. For example, the Corridor program fosters collaboration between feeder elementary schools and their zoned middle school. The elementary and middle schools share improvements

in classroom instruction and school organization with each other, work together to improve the articulation between successive levels of schooling, and thereby encourage successful student transition. In seven community school district "corridors" (selected in a citywide competition) the Fund for New York City Public Education offered a rich menu of staff development programs, enrichment activities and support services, all provided by intermediaries. This 5-year effort involved more than 30 schools and approximately 50 intermediaries in planning and implementing new teaching and support services including arts instruction, after-school enrichment and family services, and in developing more effective forms of school organization.

Most recently, the role of intermediary collaborations was significantly broadened by the New Visions initiative funded by the Aaron Diamond Foundation (whose funding also initiated the Corridor Project) and administered by the Fund for New York City Public Education. Through New Visions, the NYC school system invited the creation of new, small high schools structured as collaborations between system partners and external intermediaries. Almost 300 groups submitted proposals and the 16 new high schools that will result from the initiative represent collaborations with universities, hospitals, trade unions, museums, churches, and a wide range of youth-serving community-based organizations.

Another broad-scale effort, the Beacons Initiative, has developed 37 school-based community centers operating seven days a week until late in the evening. A wide range of community-based organizations offer tutoring, homework help, counseling, adult education, family support, parent organizing, adult and youth recreation, evening meals, weekend programming, periodic health assessments and a range of other supports as part of a citywide effort to integrate services at school sites and, in the process, dramatically improve the organization, responsiveness and outcomes of schooling. Through a range of partnerships with community groups, city agencies, social service agencies, parents organizations and youth groups, the Beacons offer multiple opportunities for families to support their children's

MOTOR MOMS AND DADS
In one elementary school in Wheeling, Illinois, parent volunteers help kindergarten children improve their motor skills by leading them in jumping, climbing, balance beam, games and exercises. Using an established curriculum parents and teachers work together. One Motor Mom says, "It's a great w; to get to know other parents, teachers, and my daughter's peers."

academic capacity and enhance their social and emotional development. Ten of the Beacons have developed joint programs with the city's Child Welfare Administration; these programs offer outreach, counseling, and practical assistance to distressed parents and engage them in supporting their children's education.

What are the implications of these increasingly comprehensive and sophisticated interventions into New York City schooling? Clearly, the role of intermediaries directly affects the individual schools involved. More broadly, the inclusion of intermediaries is significantly expanding education as a public accountability are extending and complicating traditionally restrictive modes of school organization and control. These trends may indicate a shift toward a more expansive schooling sector in which the boundaries between public and private nonprofit entities increasingly blur, contributing to significant gains in quality education for all our children.

BUILDING BEACONS FOR CHILDREN AND FAMILIES IN NEW YORK CITY

by Karen R. Brown

Community Elementary School 11 is a landmark public school building located in Highbridge, a geographically isolated corner of the southwest Bronx. Part of the poorest Congressional district in the United States, Highbridge lacks adequate shopping, preschool and school-age child care, youth programming, and education/training programs. Highbridge is also a highly dense community with three times the citywide average number of children per square mile, and new city-sponsored apartments have increased the number of families moving into the neighborhood.

Before the fall of 1991, the school closed at three o'clock, the standard closing time for public schools in New York City. During the summer of 1991, however, a Beacon school-based community center sponsored by Bronx Community College's Office of Continuing Education opened the school's doors after-hours. Starting out small with a self-defense class, arts and crafts workshops, and field trips, the MOSAIC (Maximizing Opportunity, Service & Action in the Community) Center has grown to offer its 3000 members a variety of free activities over the last two years. These have included classes in GED, conversational English, Afro-Brazilian dance and aerobics; workshops in nutrition and arts and crafts; support groups and parent education, a youth education/training program, test preparation for training and jobs, and a Job Bank; AIDS prevention training for women, an after-school program with hot meals; a food cooperative; a chorus; and a competitive

cheerleading team. Other special activities at MOSAIC have included sponsoring a City Volunteer Corps team, Summer Youth Employment Program registration and work team, a community garden, holiday celebrations and awards ceremonies for children and volunteers.

In order to offer these programs, Bronx Community College collaborates with a wide variety of organizations, including the local police precinct, community school district, churches, cultural organizations, community-based and citywide organizations, and city agencies.

In June of 1991, the City of New York began the Beacons initiative, a new and complex model of neighborhood-based integrated service delivery for children and families.[1] Spearheaded by then Mayor David N. Dinkins and launched by the New York City Department of Youth Services (DYS), the City opened ten school-based community centers in neighborhoods like Highbridge where youth have been affected by crime, AIDS, and substance abuse.

The Beacons have been implemented by non-profit, community-based organizations and educational institutions selected through a competitive RFP process. The parent agency for each Beacon works closely with an advisory council consisting of neighborhood youth, parents, school personnel, community school boards, and neighborhood and citywide service providers.

It is anticipated that 37 Beacons will be operating by January 1994—with at least one in each of the city's 32 community school districts. Now one of nation's largest city-financed projects, the Beacons have increased the hours that schools are open by 300 percent and are open an average of 3,500 hours per year and 315 days a year—during evenings, weekends, school holidays, and summer vacation.

Each Beacon center receives a $450,000 grant from the Department of Youth Services (DYS). This funding originates from the Safe Streets/Safe City initiative with support from the New York City Council and the New York State Legislature. Because the core funding from DYS is limited, each Beacon works to raise funds from other sources to support program expansion. Several private foundations, such as the Aaron Diamond Foundation, the Annie E. Casey Foundation and the J.P. Morgan & Co. Incorporated Fund have pledged support to the Beacons.

Why locate new community centers in old public schools? Like Community Elementary School 11, New York City school buildings are often located in the heart of the community and are relatively the best maintained buildings. In a densely populated city like

"First and pe[...]rtant, new organiza[...]stablish comm[...]tor of the M[...] be in sync with[...]p the vision clear at all tir[...]

New York, space for children and families is a treasured commodity and community-based agencies looking to expand their programs often have difficulty finding affordable, appropriate, and secure space. With auditoriums, cafeterias equipped with kitchens, classrooms, and gymnasiums, previously underused public schools are rich with program possibilities.

Highbridge resident and MOSAIC member Donna Cassesee believes that schools are ideal places to reach out to parents. "When you put up a flyer for a program, people may look at it and then continue on. But when the program is right there—in the school where they bring their children everyday—it's easier to learn about the center's services." Cassese also believes that parents—especially single working parents like herself—need schools to be open beyond school hours. "Weekend programs are especially important since they allow working parents to get errands done knowing their children are safe," says Cassese.

In addition, Beacons can be effective collaborators with classroom teachers, social workers, guidance counselors and principals. Several Beacons like the MOSAIC Center have paraprofessionals and teachers working in the after-school programs or involved in designing educational enrichment programs.

Another unique feature of the Beacons is the interagency collaborations which expand Beacons' programming. For example, the Department of Youth Services and the Child Welfare Administration have agreed to offer family preservation support programs in several Beacons aimed at preventing foster-care placement for families at risk of abuse and the Board of Education's Office of Adult and Continuing Education offers GED, Adult Basic Education and English as Second Language classes in several Beacons. The Department of Employment has funded youth employment training programs (combining classroom-based instruction with fieldwork) at five Beacons. The Department of Health and its local health centers have linked with several Beacons for health assessments and screening, health fairs, referrals, and nutrition workshops and several Beacons like MOSAIC are working toward establishing on-site health clinics. [2]

The Beacons have also become centers for community organizing efforts. The MOSAIC Center and Assemblywoman Aurelia Green's office collaborated on a well-attended community conference on substance abuse prevention entitled "Save Our Community, Save Ourselves". Other Beacons have sponsored immunization campaigns and citizenship registration days in addition to special community conferences. [3]

School-based community centers cannot be created from the ground up overnight. The Beacons have experienced several start-up challenges and addressed them in creative ways.

First and perhaps most important, new organizations like Beacons must establish community trust. JuWon Choi, co-director of the MOSAIC center says, "You need to be in sync with the community and keep the vision clear at all times." Sonia Sanchez, assistant director of the Beacon sponsored by Seneca Community Center in the Hunts Point section of the Bronx, concurs. "Community residents in our underserved neighborhoods are used to having new programs come in and then leave. They are not apt to trust a new program immediately, and it will take great deal of effort to gain that trust. But if your staff gets out there in the neighborhood and explains the center's services truthfully—not making promises they can't keep—progress will be made."

School layout and late evening hours make security a daily challenge for the Beacons. The MOSAIC Center's response is typical. It designates special security staff to patrol the building, supplemented by volunteers. Walkie-talkies allow staff to communicate from different parts of the building. Community police officers also stop in the Beacon on a regular basis.

Sharing multi-purpose space with the regular "day school" is also a challenge. CES 11's principal, Robert Lerman, says sharing the building with another agency—a completely new endeavor—requires constant cooperation. Elizabeth Sak, the director of the new Beacon in Crotona/Morrisania sponsored by Phipps Community Development Corporation, underscores the importance of establishing open communication channels with the school principal, classroom teachers, community school board and school superintendent.

Finally, staffing over long periods of time has also required resourcefulness. Most Beacons have different shifts of workers, including evening and weekend teams. Volunteers are also critical to operations; the MOSAIC Center offers ongoing volunteer orientations. Because Beacons are committed to hiring community residents for whom this may be a first professional position, initial and ongoing staff development and recognition are crucial.

Innovative programs like the Beacons expect these challenges and others. Between answering the telephone, one of MOSAIC's teen staff members, Onika Manning, knowingly remarks, "Running a new community center is not easy, but it is exciting to be able to start new programs that can really help children and their parents."

"Home-school partnership is no longer a luxury. There is an urgent need for schools to find ways to support the success of all our children. One element that we know contributes to more successful children and more successful schools across all populations is parent involvement in children's education. Partnership with families is not just useful—it is crucial."
—Swap, S. M. (1993). *Developing Home-School Partnerships: From Concepts to Practice.* (New York: Teachers College Press.)

Notes

The Citizen's Committee for the Children of New York notes that there are three service integration approaches used in New York City: case-level, program-level, and system-level. The Beacon centers are an example of a program-level service integration while Agenda for Children Tomorrow (ACT), a foundation/city partnership seeking to build integrated service networks in local communities, is a system-level service integration effort. See Keeping Track of New York's City's Children, A Citizens Committee for Children Status Report 1993, p 136-7

[2] The Beacon in Far Rockaway, operated by Rockaway Development and Revitalization Corporation has initiated an on-site health clinic in collaboration with a local community-based health center. The clinic offers medical screening, substance-abuse prevention services, nutrition education, family counseling and referrals

[3] For example, the Washington Heights Beacon sponsored by Alianza Dominicana has organized a series of community conferences including a youth conference and a conference on the role of Dominican women

Karen R. Brown has worked at the MOSAIC Center of Bronx Community College since February 1992. She can be contacted by writing to the MOSAIC Center, 1257 Ogden Avenue, Bronx, NY 10452 or calling 718/590-0101.

What's Going on in Beacons?

Activities at Beacon Centers throughout New York City

AM

PM

Special Events

Teen Dance

Meditation/Conflict Resolution

Health Clinic

Music Workshop

Jazz Aerobics for Young Adults

Parents as School Volunteers

Youth Parents Workshop

Mid-Night Summer Basketball
Summer Performance/ Workshops

Resource Center

Teen Lounge

Narcotics Anonymous

Teen Father Group

Inventor Class

Family Outreach

Sewing
Counseling Services
Foster Care
Preventive Services

English as a Second Language (ESL) Classes

Homework Help

Local Employment Action Program

Family Night Activities

Street Outreach

Breakfast

Tutoring/ Homework Help

Girl Scouts

Gym

Mind Games

GED

Family Meal

Beacon College Campus

Community Meetings

Track

Chorus

Library

Health Clinic

Drama

Computer Lab

12

11

10

9

8

7

6

5

4

3

2

1

PROFILES

The MacArthur Project

Community Resource Center at MacArthur School
1123 Vestal Avenue
Binghamton, NY 13903

Mary Haust, Project Coordinator

Early one morning, about 6:30, as Mary Haust was sitting down to catch up on some work, she heard a knock at the door of the MacArthur School's Community Resource Center in Binghamton, New York. Standing there, almost crying, was a young woman, her three young children by her side, still in their pajamas. "Can you help me?" the young mother asked desperately. Haust, who is Project Coordinator of the MacArthur Project quickly brought the little group inside. After learning of an abusive situation which forced this family out of their home, she arranged to bring them to a safe place and ultimately to assist them through this difficult time.

Opening its doors from 6:30 a.m. to 11 p.m. is just one way the Mac-Arthur School serves the community of Binghamton. In 1987, the Binghamton City School District received one of four "School as Community Site" grants from the New York State Education Department to improve both its students' academic achievement and the quality of life of its community. The MacArthur School, an elementary school serving approximately 600 students, was selected as the "lab site" for the project. MacArthur is now one of 34 Community schools. Through the MacArthur Project the MacArthur School and the Community Resource Center jointly offer extensive educational and human services to more than 400 families.

Before MacArthur, the Binghamton School District had already initiated prevention and intervention programs on the secondary level. It had come to regard these efforts as "too little, too late," says Mary Haust. "We needed to get children so that when they came into school, they came in as successes." The MacArthur Project recognized that formal education must begin before a child's birth and continue throughout the child's school experience. The project aimed to develop "a school committed to successful education of all children and...to achieving that goal through new types of collaboration within the community." It identified four key elements of that collaboration: parent participation, improved curriculum, family-centered early years support, and human services support.

MacArthur serves a heterogeneous community. Its students live in very affluent areas as well as in the inner-city economic development zone. Over 50 percent of MacArthur's children receive some type of public assistance.

The MacArthur Project created PACT, Parents and Children Together, modeled on Missouri's Parents as Teachers program. PACT serves 180 families with 260 children. Trained parent educators work with parents of children from birth to age three through a combination of monthly home visits and group meetings. Children also receive periodic developmental screenings. "PACT is really the anchor of all of the other services at

"By the ... en ... his ... to five"

MacArthur," remarks Haust.

In addition to PACT, the MacArthur School houses a Head Start program, a pre-kindergarten program, and an all-day kindergarten. Such a variety of early childhood services rarely share the same location. By the time a child enters kindergarten, the MacArthur School may have been involved with his/her family's life for up to five years.

Several other projects support families as prime educators of their children, including the Primary Adjustment Program, the Home Visitors Program, and EPIC (Effective Parenting Information for Children), which trains teachers to help parents develop self-esteem and decision-making and problem-solving skills.

The MacArthur Project also provides social services to the families in the community. The County Department of Social Services places a full-time social worker in the school to complement the work of the school guidance counselor, who focuses on the students.

The MacArthur Project encourages community involvement and support by recruiting high school seniors, college students, local hospital workers, and other community volunteers to improve children's educational experiences. Some volunteers operate Arts at Noon, an arts and enrichment program during lunch recess. Volunteers from United Health Services and the Urban League provide separate tutoring programs for MacArthur Students.

Mary Haust stresses that the project could not succeed without community agencies. "The community school effort succeeds because of the community agencies. Our issues don't involve whether we're going to get past x, y, or z, but HOW we're going to DO it!"
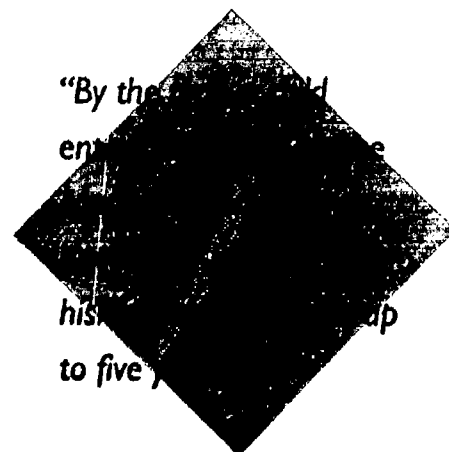
RESEARCH & EVALUATION

RURAL SCHOOLS AND SERVICE INTEGRATION:
They Seem Willing——But Are They Able?

by Robert Bhaerman

S chools in the 1990s no longer operate according to business as usual. Almost every week some interest group at the federal, state, or local level proposes a new strategy that boldly states: "This is what is wrong with schools, and here is what we should do to set them right." Because few of the proposed initiatives have been tested over time, educators may want to reject some of them out of hand. Others, however, indicate great promise for improving the conditions of schools and the communities they serve.

One of the more promising of these proposed initiatives is based on the vision of schools as community learning and service centers that deliver a wide array of health, educational, and social services to children, youth, and their families. The delivery process, often called *service integration*, implies fundamental transformation of the missions of both schools and community agencies.

Rural children, youth, and their families particularly face an inordinate amount of educational, health, and social problems, yet often they are not considered by many service providers. As recent Children's Defense Fund (CDF) data indicate, many of the needs of rural students and their families equal or surpass those in urban and suburban communities.[1] In a brief summary of his longer CDF study, Arloc Sherman noted that "childcare is in shorter supply in rural areas, rural preschool children are less likely to be in programs with educational content, and rural childcare workers have less education than metro childcare workers."[2]

A Rural Perspective

In late 1992, I began to study service integration from a rural perspective, reviewing the relevant literature, corresponding with numerous practitioners, and surveying 20 additional practitioners by means of a 13-item, open-ended questionnaire. The questions related to such issues as the roles of rural school teachers and administrators, the strengths and needs of rural schools and communities, ways of overcoming barriers to service integration, services offered or not offered in rural areas, location of services, primary target groups, the role of parents and families in planning service delivery, parental acceptance of services, governance, resources, facilities, state mandates, and evaluation data. The responses to the survey were rich in detail and valuable insights were abundant. I used their valuable information to prepare the following summary observations:

• Teachers' and administrators' roles would be enhanced as schools move toward greater involvement in service integration, but how far they will

"Because of th[...] highly visible
position i[...] chools are
the l[...]roactive
lead[...] muni-
ties appe[...] this
direction. The [...] they able?"

decide to extend their roles will vary. Because teachers will be more involved in referring students to programs, they must familiarize themselves with available services. To guard against unrealistically over-extending themselves, they must find a workable balance between their roles as classroom teachers and as ombudspersons for children, youth, and families.

• Rural schools have evident strengths as well as some weaknesses. Because their smaller size means they often are less bureaucratic, more flexible, and more capable of networking, they can build more readily on their greater knowledge of individual children, youth, and families. In some cases, however, they may need to pool their resources in attempting to overcome problems resulting from geographical and professional isolation.

• Many creative ways have been identified to overcome the barriers unique to rural areas, including extensive educational (awareness) programs, varied approaches for transportation (buses, vans, pooling rides), and satellite centers in the community. The town-meeting format has been found to be helpful for identifying and mobilizing local resources and opening lines of communication early enough so that problems can be recognized and addressed.

• Although health and social services are available in rural areas, there are many gaps. Mental health services are not as evident as they might be. Often when services are available, they are not acces-

Service Integration through the Rural Prism

Financial Resources

- Financial resources in rural schools and communities generally are more limited than in metropolitan and suburban areas.

- As a result, educational, health, and social services often are more limited, particularly in such areas as childcare and parenting education. Since there are fewer health care providers, certain services are provided at minimal levels, if at all, (e.g., mental health services).

- Human resources and technical resources also are adversely affected by a lack of financial resources.

- Rural schools and community agencies have a continuous need for expanding their funding and pooling their resources more extensively.

Human Resources

- Both school and community agency staff are often limited in number and available time. Their projected roles are extensive and often they are required to do more with fewer resources and less support.

- There is often a close relationship between the school and the community in rural areas. Since people know each other, trust may be easier to build, and "turf" issues easier to overcome.

- Since rural school and community agency staff often tend to be more cohesive because of their smaller size, a greater propensity exists to collaborate, "to make it work." In order to survive, they have to work together.

Technical Resources

- Accessibility of services and transportation are two of the more serious problems in rural areas. Rural communities also are sometimes lacking in the variety and quality of health and social services.

- Staff development for teachers, administrators, counselors, and other support staff is limited. Cross training of school and community agency staff also is limited.

- Technical assistance generally is underdeveloped and often is needed in further planning, implementing, and assessing service integration efforts.
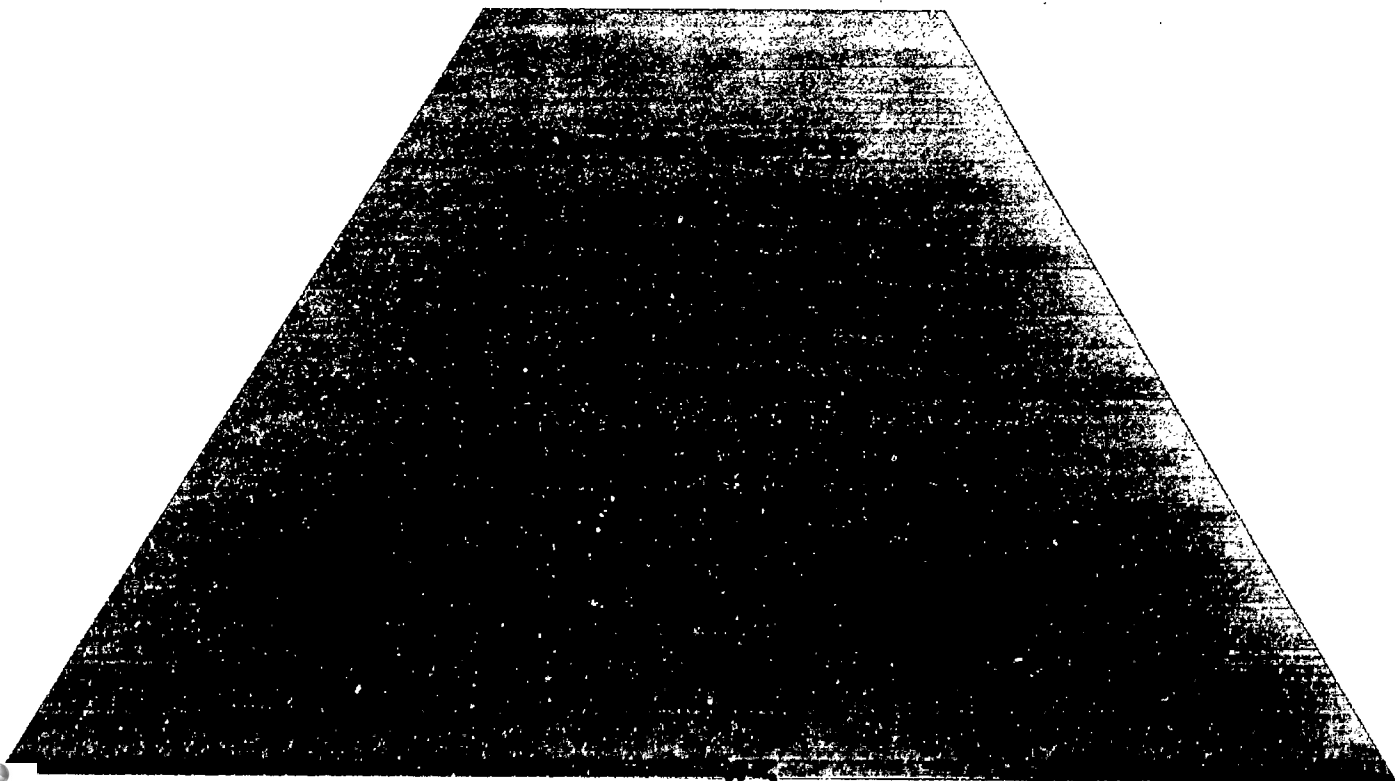
sible, due to a lack of public transportation.

- Although services increasingly are being provided in or near schools, some services are provided in satellite centers in rural communities.

- The primary target of the services varies but, to a large extent, services focus on at-risk students—those educationally, socially, and economically disadvantaged, the traditionally underserved. Some attempts are being made to include all children, youth, and their families since, as one practitioner noted, "on a given day, any student can be at risk."

- Many rural schools are involved in planning service delivery, as are parents and families to varying degrees. The latter are particularly involved in advisory capacities. The town-meeting approach has proven to be a successful initial planning mechanism, at least in the one community cited.

- Most rural parents are receptive to the services offered, although as one practitioner noted, "I wish they were not so satisfied with the level of services they receive."

- Rural schools are involved in the governance of interagency collaborations, commonly through the involvement of school boards. Other stakeholders play advisory roles. Some service integration efforts are managed by other agencies either directly or by means of contracted services.

- Resources in rural schools and communities are usually available but on a very limited basis.

- Facilities are usually an important concern. Sometimes "the existence of a facility arrangement determines whether the service can be delivered at a rural site." A closely related issue is "getting adequate services to or in the facilities."

- Practitioners' concerns about state mandates vary. Some states (e.g., Florida) support but do not mandate collaboration. Some practitioners indicate that their states have established mandates but do not always accompany them with sufficient resources. What is most important, as superintendent noted, is the vision,

commitment, time, and energy needed to motivate people and organizations to want to collaborate.

- Rural schools are not yet deeply involved in evaluation efforts, although there are some exceptions. By and large, the implementation process appears too new to have produced extensive results.

Rural Resources

Those of us who are concerned about rural education need to consider the implications of service integration in light of the rural context. Undoubtedly, a

"Many of ... ve been iden... ...rriers ... transp... ...centers in the com..."
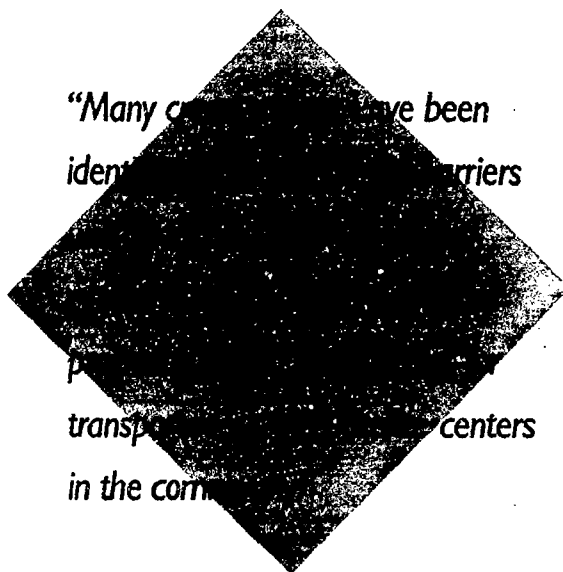
different lens can be used to analyze service integration in rural schools and communities. The diagram that follows presents a four-fold perspective. Each section deals with one of the dimensions found to be evident in the literature reviewed, the correspondence received, and the survey conducted. This diagram illustrates how I see service integration "through the rural prism."

In sum, **financial resources** generally are limited in rural areas. Financial limitations may adversely affect not only educational, health, and social services but also human and technical resources. **Human resources** are stretched thin, since both school and community agency staff are more limited in number and available time. On the other hand, school-community relationships often are closer. Rural schools and community agencies have "to make it work" because smaller size often makes cooperation a matter of survival. **Technical resources,** particularly those relating to accessibility of services and transportation, are of great concern, as is the need for staff

development and technica... ...tance in planning, implem... ..... and assessing service integra.... Lastly, there is the issue of **knowledge resources.** Although rural school personnel often have considerable knowledge of students and their families and of the available community resources (or the lack thereof), and although rural communities may find it easier to establish networking and communication, rural school staff, indeed all school personnel, need to know what has worked elsewhere and what may not have worked as well. In short, although resources in rural schools and communities often are more limited, the educational, health, and social service needs often are as great or greater.

In order to overcome these four resource limitations, creative mechanisms can be developed along with the appropriate team leadership, the necessary matching of facilities to planned services, and—most important— the vision, commitment, and long hours of hard work needed for successful service integration efforts.

Because of their central and highly visible position in the community, rural schools are the logical candidate for assuming a proactive leadership role. Rural schools and communities appear to be willing to move in this direction. The question is: Are they able? Hopefully, the combination of shared resources, vision, commitment, and hard work **will** make a difference between merely being willing and being able to meet all of the educational, health, and social service needs of rural children, youth, and their families.

Notes

SHERMAN, ARLOC. (1992) Faring by the Wayside Children in Rural America (Washington, D.C. Children's Defense Fund.)

SHERMAN, ARLOC (1992) Children's Defense Fund reports on children in rural America in Family Resource Coalition Report. Volume 11, Number 1, pp. 12-13

Robert Bhaerman, Ed.D., is a senior research and development specialist at Research for Better Schools, the regional educational laboratory for the mid-atlantic states. This article has been adapted from Dr. Bhaerman's forthcoming monograph, Service Integration Through the Rural Prism. *He can be contacted at Research for Better Schools, 444 North Third Street, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania 19123-4107.*

46
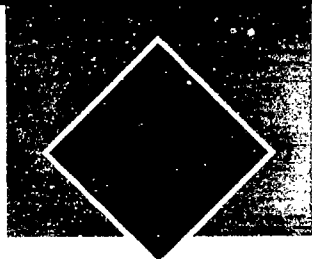
D.A.F.F.O.D.I.L. CENTER
Diversified Agencies Feeling Fine Over Developing Infant Linkages

Ware County Board of Education
P.O. Box 1789
Waycross, GA 31502

Debra Cargill, Director of Staff Development and Preschool Programs

When a young child in Ware County, Georgia was diagnosed with spinal meningitis, fear began to spread throughout the DAFFODIL Center in Waycross. Several cases of meningitis had been reported earlier that year in north Georgia. Because DAFFODIL had developed a strong relationship with the Department of Public Health, it could arrange for a deputy district health director to disseminate information about meningitis, including the availability of vaccines, to parents who use the center. "Everybody had early access to information, and it left people feeling more comfortable and avoided a real media-induced panic," recalls Debra Cargill, Director of Staff Development and Preschool Programs.

Growing out of the Family Connection Initiative in Georgia in 1991, the DAFFODIL Center is a collaborative effort of education and human services agencies that provides early intervention and preschool services to children from birth to five years of age and their families. Because educators, agency providers, and the community at large in Ware County had been working closely together for a long time, the DAFFODIL Center in some ways merely assigned a new name to the preexisting close cooperation and sharing of resources in a small, rural community.

With a population of close to 36,000, rural Ware County has a per capita annual income well below Georgia's average. It reports high rates of infant mortality, teen pregnancies, school dropout, and juvenile crime and delinquency. Its at-risk youth and their families need many kinds of help.

The DAFFODIL Center houses five different programs under one roof. Modeled after DAISY (Diversified Agencies Involved in Serving Youth) which provides services to Ware County adolescents, DAFFODIL provides parallel services for the youngest members of the community. "People really see DAFFODIL as *the* place for services for preschool children," Cargill boasts.

Administered and funded by the Department of Human Resources, the Satilla Early Intervention (EI) Team and the Daffodil Nursery serve infants and toddlers from birth through age two. The EI Team, composed of an early intervention coordinator, a social worker, a behavior specialist, a nurse, and a case-management coordinator, works with families both in their homes and at the center. After Team members assess the needs of an individual child and family, they work to link the family to the appropriate community resources. They also provide overall case management for the family.

For children whom the EI Team identifies as having developmental delays, the DAFFODIL Nursery provides a comprehensive program, either at the center or in the families' homes. The program stresses strong parental involvement in activities planned for the children.

The other three programs at DAFFODIL serve children between three and five years of age. The Ware County Board of Education funds and administers two of them: the Preschool Special Needs Program and the Kids and Parents at School (KAPS) program. The Preschool Special Needs Program serves children who may have difficulty speaking, hearing, seeing, or thinking. Families help develop individual education plans for their children; parent education is a strong outreach component of Preschool Special Needs. KAPS works with at-risk four-year-olds and their parents. Parents learn how to foster their child's cognitive, social, and motor development and to interact more positively with their children. DAFFODIL also oversees a Head Start program for eligible three- to five-year-old children and their parents.

When asked what she is proudest of about DAFFODIL, Cargill quickly responded, "The number of children!" Two years ago, Ware County served only about 60 young children at DAFFODIL. Today, more than 200 children and their families participate regularly in DAFFODIL's programs. Cargill is also delighted by the level and quality of collaboration among the agencies. Both the availability of services and public awareness of the programs continue to grow.

Its resources, collaborative techniques, and success have made DAFFODIL a model for new preschool programs throughout the state of Georgia. "We still have a long way to go," Cargill says. "We keep struggling, but we're very pleased with the progress we've made."

Kentucky Looks at the First Year of Its Statewide Program and Charts a Course for the Future

The Kentucky Family Resource and Youth Service Center (FRYSC) program, established through the Kentucky Education Reform Act (KERA), is in its second year of operation. There are 373 centers operating, 259 in rural areas, 81 in cities and 33 in suburbs. FRYS centers target low-income families and as such they are located in or near schools that have at least 20 percent of their students eligible for free lunch. The Kentucky Cabinet for Human Resources administers a proposal process through which schools can apply for funding.

The program is designed to reduce barriers to learning through school-based family support and parent involvement initiatives. Conceptually, the FRYSC program is grounded in concern for overcoming the pervasive effects of poverty, but it takes an integrated service approach and serves all children and families in participating schools. In addition to direct involvement with targeted children and families, Family Resource and Youth Service Centers provide a broad range of prevention and intervention programs for individuals, groups, and organizations.

Wherever you travel in Kentucky, you hear success stories. In Richmond the elementary principal explains that more people are getting their GEDs. In Pike County a Department of Social Services social worker tells a program monitor that agencies never got together before like they are now. Kids are getting glasses and grandparents who are primary caregivers have joined a support group in Paducah. In Lexington a parent member of the center council describes how she spoke with a national television reporter about her role in tailoring the program to her community. The family support centers are highly visible in ˉˉˉˉ' ways. Many centers send staff to

visit families at home. Community resource fairs are sometimes overwhelmed by parent attendance: 80 children showed up for childcare at one resource fair surprising caretakers. (The free vision and health screenings especially attracted people.) Community mental and physical health professionals, social security intake workers, and employees of many other agencies provide on-site services. Sometimes the family resource center assists with transportation to community agencies. No one agency can do the job alone. Human service workers, civic club members, parents, business owners, and educators are partners as local councils shape their community family centers.

And now in addition to anecdotal reports and qualitative information, FRYSCs' success is being quantified and analyzed thanks to its evaluation system. Data are derived based on a program evaluation approach that draws on standard computerized information management systems designed for and located at local centers. The centers use a common intake form with some variations for individual centers' needs. A case management system tracks the progress of individual families. The software, developed by Dr. Robert J. Illback of Spaulding University in Louisville, links the local centers to a centralized 'host' program at the Cabinet for Human Resources. Centers send documentation to the Cabinet for Human Resources twice a year.

As of June 1993, 201 of the 222 then-existing centers were able to report electronically. Those 201 centers were serving 18,912 families. They reported that 72.6 percent of the people served were economically disadvantaged (i.e., free-lunch eligible).

Data for the 1992-93 school year have been analyzed in a report by the

Kentucky Cabinet for Human Resources. Three central questions guided this analysis:

1. Who is being served?

2. What services are being delivered?

3. What outcomes are associated with participation in the program?

The report deals only with services delivered to targeted children and families.[1] What follows is the summary of preliminary evaluation results.

"A total of 18,912 families and 21,270 students are represented in the databases summarized in this report. Demographic information regarding these individuals reveals great diversity in terms of caregiver characteristics (e.g. marital status, parental education) and financial resources (e.g., estimated income, race, and language). In general, the population served reflects program goals with relatively high levels of undereducated and economically disadvantaged persons participating in programs. More than half of the participants are referred by school personnel, but a large number are either self-referred or enter through another community organization, demonstrating both school and community linkages. Girls and boys are about equally represented in the population, as are all age and grade levels.

These children and youth exhibit diverse, multiple, and interrelated difficulties with health, behavior, emotional, and learning programs topping the list. Teacher ratings at intake confirm that they experience substantial educational difficulties in areas such as attendance, classroom performance, achievement, grades, peer relations, retention, and drop-out risk. Family and

setting risk factors are also numerous and complex, including social isolation, financial problems, clothing, childcare, food, family conflict, family crises, divorce, and unemployment. These multiple needs and stressors are seen as functionally related to children's school performance and amenable to broad-based community interventions, consistent with the aims of the program.

Family Resource and Youth Service Centers, by legislation, provide core and/or optional services to targeted children, youth, and families. Health services and referrals emerge as the most frequently utilized core service, with parent training (Families-in-Training, Parent and Child Education (PACE)), childcare (both preschool and after-school), and counseling services also extensively used. Notably, almost half of the targeted families receive one or more optional service, calling into question the utility of this early service categorization. Family Resource and Youth Service Centers provide most services to targeted families, indicating that the program serves to fill service delivery gaps in local communities but also raising concerns about maintaining program focus and avoiding duplication. Despite extensive program efforts, families continue to need health care services, housing, education, parenting skills, recreational services, respite, and employment services.

Preliminary outcome data for a subsample of children and families who have completed program participation suggests that improvements in classroom performance variables (as rated by teachers) are seen, particularly in areas such as completing classwork and homework, following directions and rules, and remaining on task. More global measures of change (e.g. grades, achievement) do not register substantial gains (not surprisingly, given their more longterm nature). Families report receiving high levels of support from the program, and over time, may perceive more support from informal sources in their communities (such as relatives, friends, and neighbors) as the program intends. Finally, consumer satisfaction data gathered from parents, youth, school personnel, and community members is overwhelmingly positive.

In sum, demographic, service delivery, and outcome data regarding targeted children, youth, and families served by these 201 Family Resource and Youth Service Center programs across the Commonwealth document that the

program is well on its way to achieving its goals. Given its short period of operation and the daunting challenge of initiating and supporting over 200 school-based programs statewide, the program is remarkable in its early accomplishments. Not only are large numbers of children and families being served, but the evidence points to the depth, complexity, and quality of this innovative response to local and community needs.

The evaluation report endorses the program as a vital element of school reform and urges full and unqualified support for the program. It also makes the following specific recommendations:

1. Develop and expand support and technical assistance to centers and their coordinators. Coordinators come from a variety of backgrounds and all must have a clear sense of the mission of the program as they utilize their limited resources in an intentional manner. Many would benefit from help maintaining program focus through the use of program management techniques for planning, personnel management, and evaluation. These could be provided through direct assistance from regional liaisons, systematic monitoring visits, training in management strategies, and peer collaboration and supervision between and among center coordinators.

2. There is an emerging sense of what the most "active ingredients" of a successful center are concerning areas such as resource allocation, school support, community involvement, and family empowerment. This data should

"Major studies over the past decades have indicated that parents are significant educators of their children and that not even the best school can do the job alone."

—Rich, D. L. (1993). Building the bridge to reach minority parents: Education infrastructures supporting success for all children. In N. F. Chavkin, Ed., *Families and Schools in a Pluralistic Society*. Albany, NY: SUNY

be used to create an operational framework for ongoing self-evaluation of local centers.

3. Planned collaboration and mutual support between center coordinators must be enhanced in order to combat isolation, stress, and burnout associated with the position and to avoid duplication of services. Electronic bulletin boards and other media (e.g., newsletters) might contribute to increasing communication between centers.

4. Jettison the distinction between "core" and "optional" components as designated by the enabling legislation. These categories no longer have practical relevance for planning or evaluating the program and the differentiation is in conflict with the program's philosophy. That is, services are individualized and based on the needs of the child and family, not categorical. A more comprehensive and descriptive set of broad categories for service provision should be developed.

5. Program planners and funders must understand the inherent limitations of the FRYSC program even as they advocate for additional assistance in areas such as health care and housing. Despite the extensive efforts of the program, targeted participants still have many unmet needs.

6. Further refine the evaluation and information management systems based on the recommendation of a work group of coordinators and FRYSC staff. Expand the number of centers visited as part of qualitative evaluation procedures from ten to fifteen. Support greater local use of information management systems for program planning."

PROFILES

San Antonio Independent School District Family Support Program

J.T. Brackenridge Elementary School
1214 Guadalupe Street
San Antonio, TX 78207

Rod Radle, Project Coordinator

Try to imagine a school district program that:

• Provides individual therapy, student therapy groups, and parent support groups to students and families to help them deal with issues ranging from minor behavioral problems to severe abuse and depression— all this in school buildings, during school hours

• Employs a mental health team to supply coordinated, concentrated counseling and goal setting to the school's neediest students

• Offers crisis intervention, counseling, and parenting education services, as well as referrals to child-protective custody agencies and public agencies that serve as family advocates

• Operates a formal parent education program throughout the year, driven by parents' interests and needs, to help parents develop skills to assist their children and themselves, including formal adult GED and ESL classes during the day at the school

• Encourages and trains parents to volunteer and to take leadership roles in their children's schools

• Trains students and faculty to use an alternative method of conflict resolution to handle problems at school, at home and in the community

• Helps families long before their children enter school by providing prenatal care to assure healthy births, an' preschool education and support services—offered in the families' homes—to help children reach appropriate developmental milestones.

Sound too good to be true? Maybe for some, but not for the San Antonio Independent School District (SAISD) Family Support Program.

Initiated in July 1990, as one of four Hogg Foundation School of the Future sites, the SAISD Family Support Program (FSP) has developed seven primary programs to enhance the mental well-being of families. The SAISD FSP serves approximately 2,500 predominantly Latino children and their families at 2 elementary schools and a middle school. The project is based on the work of Drs. James Comer and Edward Ziegler, who have attempted to make one-stop mental health services available through neighborhood schools. The School of the Future is designed to provide an integrated array of health and human services, both treatment and prevention, using the school as the focus of their delivery.

The SAISD FSP started by offering primary services to meet the basic needs of the families in the community. After families began to trust and support the project, it added long-term preventive programs. The SAISD FSP has integrated its various programs into the overall structure of the three schools.

"Parent involvement in all aspects of the program is especially exciting," says Rod Radle, project coordinator. "The first year about 12 young mothers helped out in the school a total of 800 hours. After the third year, a core group of 45 parents had logged over 8,000 hours of volunteer time."

This strong parental commitment benefited all members of the school community. The children were regularly exposed to positive role models. The parents not only improved their own skills but also increased their understanding of the challenges faced by the teachers. The teachers in turn learned a great deal from the parents about individual students and about the general needs and concerns in the community. "It is a great trade-off all around," remarks Radle. "The increased parental involvement reinforces all the other programs and opens all kinds of doors."

Extensive evaluation efforts have been a unique feature of all three of these School of the Future sites. With the continued support and cooperation of the Hogg Foundation, the program is refining its system of tracking every student and family, connecting that family with the services provided in order to trace and document results. The results aren't all in yet, but Radle hopes to see some progress during this fourth year. "We know we're making a difference," says Radle. "It may be slow to show up in the research, but it's there!"

MOTOROLA:
A Corporate Commitment to School-Linked Collaborations

Gail Daniels, Motorola's manager of external educational systems says that the corporation's commitment to education is simply "the necessary thing to do." In developing collaborative educational initiatives, the company has been motivated by the question: Where are the employees of the future coming from? It realized that a lot of today's students, and many already in the workforce, haven't been adequately exposed to problem-based learning, team building, or inclusiveness, and they haven't learned to identify the opportunities inherent in seemingly problematic situations—skills that are increasingly necessary for success in a complex and globally competitive world. Motorola decided to do something about this.

Motorola's educational mission is to build alliances, spanning pre-kindergarten through college, that can bring about a systematic transformation of the educational system and produce "an exit level of graduates whose entry-level skills [for the job market] equal or exceed those of Motorola, its customers and suppliers." External education managers in each of the states in which Motorola has plants—Arizona, Texas, and Massachusetts—and at corporate headquarters in Schaumburg, Illinois build partnerships with educational systems and form alliances with businesses. Motorola hopes that these partnerships will have far-reaching effects on policy-making decisions, literacy commissions, educational task forces, and work/family councils.

Learning Leadership Teams

One example of Motorola partnerships in action is the District Learning Leadership Teams developed by Motorola and the Illinois Academy for Mathematics and Sciences. The teams are a "slice of the community" and contain representatives of the various constituencies whose decisions influence learning in that district: a school board member, the superintendent of schools, at least one teacher from each level or school (including union leadership), one principal from each level or school, a parent, a business or community representative, a school administrator, a college or university representative, and a healthcare or human service provider. Others, such as a legislator or a member of the non-profit sector, an alumnus or a student may also be included. The teams work to achieve superior classroom performance through the development, implementation, and evaluation of comprehensive action plans. To achieve the greatest impact, linkages are forged with entire school districts, rather than with individual schools. Each team has a four areas to concentrate on:

1. Purposes (What educational goals are we trying to achieve?)

2. Curriculum (What is taught?)

3. Instruction (How is it taught?)

4. Assessment of student learning.

The school districts and collaborating partners make a two-year commitment to training, partnership, and outcome-based assessments, and a five-year commitment to participate in a statewide longitudinal study.

The teams are guided by three facilitators—one external to the school district and two selected from the team itself. Facilitators attend a series of development seminars to learn about the stages of group development, principles of group dynamics, dealing with conflict within teams, and various exercises which foster creativity.

Daniels has been facilitating a team in middle-school District 21 in Wheeling, Illinois. As the district has developed its particular educational vision, several of its schools have begun piloting a program that uses team teaching and substitutes student "portfolio management" for report cards. Daniels indicates that teachers have noticed a difference in the students' level of interest and excitement in the classroom. They've begun learning how to solve problems and build life skills. They're making associations among their subjects and beginning to realize how school and life are connected. She also mentions an increased interest on the part of the parents; over 95 percent of parents come to parent-teacher conferences in the pilot schools, compared with 50 percent turnouts for the more traditional schools in the district.

There are currently 32 partnerships in Illinois. Massachusetts began two partnerships in 1992 and has plans for more.

Other Partnerships

Motorola is also working hard to develop administrative partnerships with school principals and superintendents. In Illinois, the company piloted a workshop which challenged administrators, as leaders, to reshape the educational future. The company is considering developing similar programs with local school boards and teachers' unions.

Motorola will be establishing parenting programs for its employees, as yet another component of their integrated approach to systemic change. They've established on-site and near-site childcare facilities in Illinois and Florida; and will be offering parent education workshops to assist parents in continuing to be actively involved in their children's development.

Overall, Daniels believes Motorola's educational and parenting initiatives tap into real needs and are part of a greater corporate obligation "to take a proactive social stance. It's not enough to give money to worthy causes. The private sector must actively partner with the "supplier" of its future workforce in order to compete as world-class enterprises."

Information Services for Parents from ERIC/EECE

by Dianne Rothenberg

The ERIC Clearinghouse on Elementary and Early Childhood Education (ERIC/EECE), long an information provider for parents, has developed two new services to supply parents with research-based information on child development, childcare, and education. These services were created to respond to a need that parents have expressed. For example, during the March 1992 annual conference of the National Association of Elementary School Principals (NAESP), more than 1,300 parents called the National Principals' Hotline with questions on corporal punishment, homework policies, and ways to handle their children at home. Commenting on the strong interest by parents, NAESP Director Sam Sava noted that the questions reflected the stresses on the American family. Many parents, according to Sava, simply seemed thankful to speak with someone who would listen because they frequently felt they had no one to turn to with their concerns about education and questions on parenting.

With parents' concerns in mind, ERIC/EECE has developed two new services to address parents' concerns.

• 800 telephone number. Parents can now use a toll-free telephone number— 1-800-583-4135—to ask ERIC/EECE for information. The toll-free number will provide parents with access to ERIC/EECE services, including a question-answering service, ERIC searches, ERIC/EECE Digests and newsletters, and referrals to other organizations.

• AskERIC. AskERIC is an electronic question-answering service that responds to question within 48 hours by drawing on the resources of the national ERIC education information system. Individuals need only send their questions via an Internet electronic mail message to "askeric@ericir.syr.edu" and they will receive a reply in 48 hours. AskERIC, which is based at the ERIC Clearinghouse on Information and Technology at Syracuse University, responds to requests with factual information for the cited, the complete text of relevant articles written for parents, or, if needed, referrals to other information providers or organizations. ERIC/EECE will answer those questions received at AskERIC which are related to elementary education in general and parenting issues in particular.

The AskERIC service joins several other ERIC-related services, including a service that provides the full text of hundreds of ERIC Digests produced by the 16 ERIC clearinghouses, on the Syracuse University AskERIC "gopher" service. Gopher (named after the University of Minnesota mascot) is one of several Internet-based, search-and-retrieve utilities. The gopher service uses menus to provide easy access to the full text of lesson plans and other documents, to ERIC searches on more than 150 topics, and to InfoGuides on several "hot" education issues that can be read online, printed out, or downloaded to users' computers. The gopher site is heavily used; in one recent week the AskERIC gopher site was accessed more than 13,000 times.

Not everyone has an address on the Internet, of course, but access is expanding, and the Internet is becoming increasingly familiar to K-12 educators and private citizens. Tens of thousands of educators in elementary and secondary schools already communicate on the

"The problem is more complicated than black people just making an effort," argues James P. Comer, the director of the School Development Project at Yale University, which works with districts around the country to improve education for low-income children. "You have to think of what has created the problems in the first place, the systematic exclusion from the economic, political, and social mainstream...the larger system still doesn't understand that we're one nation. It thinks blacks can have a heart attack without the nation dying."
—from Education Week, December 8, 1993

Internet, and many states are hurrying to develop Internet-based networks not only for educators and health and welfare workers, but also for the general public, including parents.

A growing number of communities, such as Cleveland, Ohio, and Champaign, Illinois, have established or are working to establish "Freenets," locally operated computerized information services that offer community members access to local information resources as well as to the Internet.

In addition to direct access and Freenet access to the Internet, which are usually offered without charge, several commercial companies, including Delphi, CompuServe, and Scholastic offer access to the Internet along with their other services. ACCESS ERIC, the outreach component of the ERIC system, is coordinating ERIC's relationship with commercial online education services, including America Online, GTE, and America Tomorrow. AskERIC resource and referral services will soon be available to users of some of these systems.

ERIC/EECE is eager to expand the research-based AskERIC question-answering service to new audiences of parents and others interested in high-quality based information on education, childrearing, child development, and child care. A federally funded organization, ERIC/EECE believes that the key to such expansion is collaborative work with interested federal, state, regional, and local organizations. Organizations that operate a computerized bulletin board (even if the bulletin board is not connected to the Internet) and would like to offer AskERIC services to their own constituents should contact Dianne Rothenberg at ERIC/EECE, at 1-800-583-4135 for more information.

ERIC/EECE's information services are also always available for those who prefer to contact the clearinghouse by fax or through the US mail. Send a fax to 217-333-3767, or send mail to ERIC/EECE, University of Illinois, 805 W. Pennsylvania Avenue, Urbana, IL 61801-4897.

National Organizations

Association for Childhood Education International
3615 Wisconsin Ave., N.W.
Washington. D.C 20016
202/363-6963
Conducts workshops, maintains an information service and a library Publishes books, bulletins, and portfolios.

American Association of School Administrators (AASA)
1801 North Moore Street
Arlington. VA. 22209
703/528-0700
AASA is the professional organization for over 18.000 educational leaders, including school superintendents around the world. The association publishes printed and audiovisual materials designed to increase the knowledge and skills of educational leaders, is involved in governmental relations, coordinates and sponsors conventions, and works on minority affairs.

Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching
1755 Massachusetts Ave. NW
Washington. DC 20036
202/387-7200
CFAT. founded in 1905 by Andrew Carnegie, is an independent policy center: it conducts studies devoted to strengthening American education at all levels, with an emphasis on higher education. Carnegie publications include: *The Condition of Teaching A State by State Analysis* (1990. $12); *An Imperiled Generation Saving Urban Schools* (1988, $7.50). *Report Card on School Reform The Teachers Speak* (1988. $5), a survey of more than 13.500 teachers asked to assess the impact of the school reform movement *Ready To Learn Mandate for the Nation* (1991. $8). Order directly from California/Princeton Fulfillment Services. 1445 Lower Ferry Rd. Ewing. NJ 08618. 800/777-4726

Center for the Study of Parent Involvement
John F Kennedy University
370 Camino Pablo
Orinda. CA 94536
510 254-0110
The Center, created in 1973. serves as a national information clearinghouse and provides training and technical assistance to educators and community leaders CSPI has been located at the University's Graduate School of Professional Psychology since 1992 and, in cooperation with the Department of Education, continues the work of supporting and strengthening home/school partnerships *Apple Pie*, the CSPI newsletter, is published quarterly: it offers information about parent involvement programs

around the nation, as well as reviews of research reports, articles. and books on family/school collaboration. The Center conducts an annual conference on the relationship between families and education: its 1994 conference will have an international scope in recognition of the International Year of the Family. Scheduled for October. 1994, it is entitled "Families and Schools A Global Perspective for a Multicultural Society."

Center for the Study of Social Policy
1250 Eye Street. N.W.,Suite 503
Washington. D.C.20005
202/371-1565
The Center provides information on the principles of interagency and intergovernmental planning, budgeting. and service delivery.

The Chapin Hall Center for Children
University of Chicago
1155 60th Street Chicago. Il. 60637
312/753-5900
Chapin Hall is an independent center for the research and development of policies. practices. and programs affecting children. It represents and articulates the interests of children by providing information. analysis. and an independent perspective.

Children's Defense Fund
122 C Street. NW
Washington. D.C. 20005
202 628-8787
CDF. a private. nonprofit advocacy organization gathers data. publishes reports. and provides information on key issues affecting children. It also monitors the development and implementation of federal and state policies: provides technical assistance and support to a network of state and local child advocates. organizations. and public officials: and pursues an annual legislative agenda.

Family Study Institute
121 North Kickapoo Street
Lincoln, IL 62656
217/732-3696
FSI provides materials for two courses for parents. *Reading at Home* and *Studying at Home.* A school linkage with FSI can help parents establish solid foundations for learning with their children Courses are taught by parents. and materials are sound, research-based techniques for building children's reading and study habits. Parents learn together in small groups and then apply what they've learned at home between sessions. Course materials are available in English and Spanish/English versions.

Institute for Educational Leadership
1001 Connecticut Avenue NW.
Suite 310
Washington. DC 20036
202/822-8405
IEL is a nonprofit organization dedicated to collaborative problem-solving strategies in education and among education. human services. and other sectors. IEL programs focus on cross-sector collaborations. leadership development. business-education partnerships, school restructuring. and programs designed for at-risk youth.

Institute for Responsive Education
605 Commonwealth Avenue
Boston. MA 02181
617/283-2500
IRE is a nonprofit public interest research and advocacy organization founded in 1973 to study. promote. and assist citizen participation in educational decision-making and school improvement. with special emphasis on equity issues. IRE develops policy. provides technical assistance. conducts research. and undertakes advocacy projects. and publishes case-study examples, research summaries. and resource and how-to guides about education issues and school policy-making. IRE has developed dozens of innovative programs to help schools that serve low-income children and families and has created two organizations dedicated to expanding knowledge about home-school partnerships: The Center on Families. Communities. School and Children Learning, a research and development consortium. and The League of Schools Reaching Out. a network of schools that demonstrate a commitment to improving learning through the creation of partnerships. IRE's magazine. *Equity and Choice*, is devoted to issues of educational equity. parental choices. educational reform, and multicultural and bilingual education. A publications brochure is available.

MegaSkills Educational Center of the Home and School Institute
1500 Massachusetts Ave.. NW
Washington. DC 20005
202/466-3633
This 29-year-old educational organization provides curriculum and training programs to enable schools and community groups to involve families in their children's education. MegaSkills gives families a tutoring plan which complements but does not duplicate the school's work The organization produces important educational materials and has an extensive publications list. MegaSkills conducts on-site national training programs. including MegaSkills workshops: and holds conferences that address family life: schooling. and work issues. Institute programs are geared to businesses. policymakers. and researchers. as well as to families and educators.

National Association of Partners in Education, Inc.
209 Madison Street. Ste. 401
Alexandria. VA 22314
703/836-4880
NAPE, Inc. is made up of two organizations: the National School Volunteer Program (whose 10,000 members participate in classrooms in all fifty states) and the National Symposium of Partnerships in Education (a consortium of schools. businesses and community groups that have organized to support education). NAPE. Inc publishes a regular newsletter that addresses various partnership issues. and a quarterly newsletter for its volunteer members. NAPE provides training and publishes manuals to aid schools in establishing and maintaining organized volunteer groups; convenes national. state. and regional conferences; runs an information hotline; sponsors special projects. conducts research; and provides recognition for outstanding school volunteers. partners. and exemplary programs. A publications list is available.

National Association of State Boards of Education
Coordinated Services for Children
1012 Cameron Street
Alexandria. VA 22314
703/684-4000
This private. not-for-profit association represents state and territorial boards of education. NASBE provides information on: successful programs for at-risk youth. educational policy setting at the state level. adolescent health. and early childhood education. Publications are available on each of these subjects.

National Center for Service Integration
Mathtech Inc
5111 Leesburg Pike. Suite 710
Falls Church VA 22041
Established in 1991 with a grant from the U.S Department of Health and Human Services and private foundations. the Center's goal is to improve life outcomes for children and families through the creative integration of education. health. and human services. The Center is a collaboration of six organizations: Mathtech. Inc. the Child and Family Center. the National for Children in Poverty. the National Governors Association. Policy Studies Associates. and the Yale Bush Center for Child Development. The Center's purpose is to stimulate. guide. and actively support service integration efforts throughout the country.

National Community Education Association
3929 Old Lee Highway, Ste. 91
Fairfax. VA 22030
703/359-8973
NCEA began in 1966 to advance and support community involvement in kindergarten through twelfth-grade education. community self-help. and opportunities for lifelong learning. The organization provides its members with national leadership and advocacy. publications. conferences. workshops. and information and referral services. Community advisory councils and partnerships of individual citizens. educators. and public/private organizations address community problems and concerns. NCEA distributes its own and other agencies' focused publications through a mail-order catalog. including their quarterly. *Community Education Journal*. and *Community Education Today*. a newspaper printed ten times a year.

National Youth Employment Coalition
(NYEC)
1501 Broadway. Room 1111
New York,NY 10036
212/840-1834
NYEC is a nonprofit membership organization whose mission is to increase and promote opportunities for the education. employment. and training of disadvantaged youth. NYEC is involved in a range of activities aimed at disseminating information. monitoring legislation. providing technical assistance. and promoting collaboratives. The Coalition brings together 60 member organizations concerned with youth employment.

National Conference of State Legislatures (NCSL)
1560 Broadway. Suite 700
Denver. CO 80202-5140
330/830-2200
The Children. Youth. and Families Program of NCSL offers an information clearinghouse. research assistance and publications on state policy issues relevant to children and families.

Program for Community Problem Solving (PCPS)
1301 Pennsylvania Ave.. NW. Suite 600
Washington,D.C 20004
202/626-3183
Sponsored by five nonprofit associations of community leaders. PCPS assists communities around the country in developing collaboratives PCPS serves as a clearinghouse for information related to collaborative problem solving and offers training. technical assistance. and coaching in process design. negotiation. mediation. and cross-cultural dynamics

Quality Education for Minorities (QEM)
1818 N Street. N.W.,Suite 350
Washington, D.C. 20036
202/659-1818
The QEM Network is a nonprofit organization dedicated to improving education for minorities throughout the nation. The QEM network seeks to serve as a national resource and catalyst to help unite and strengthen educational restructuring efforts to the benefit of minority children. youth. and adults. while advancing minority participation and leadership in the national debate on how to ensure access to a quality education for all citizens

School-Age NOTES
P.O. Box 40205
Nashville. TN 37204
615/242-8464
SAN is a national organization for those concerned with children and youth in out-of-school settings before and after school hours and during vacations. School-Age NOTES offers professional linkages. technical assistance and training opportunities. advocacy. and information on new resources and materials. Their eight-page monthly. *School-Age NOTES*. publishes ready-to-use activities for children. feature articles for program directors. budget hints and free resources. suggestions for summer programming. safety tips. 30 curriculum ideas per issue. and updates on the latest trends in school-age care ($22.95/year).

Zero to Three
2000 14th Street North. Suite 380
Arlington,VA 22201
703/528-4300
Zero to Three is the only national nonprofit organization dedicated solely to improving the chances for healthy physical. cognitive. and social development of infants. toddlers. and their families Through training programs. technical assistance. publications. and scientific seminars. Zero to Three works to translate scientifically based knowledge of prevention and early intervention strategies into policy and practice at the community. state. and national levels.

54

Community Board Program

Conflict Resolution Resources for Schools
and Youth
Contact: Rebecca Iverson
1540 Market Street, Ste 490
San Francisco, CA 94102
415-552-1250

In elementary schools, students nominated by their peers to be Conflict Manager Trainees receive six hours of training from teachers who have been prepared by Conflict Resolution Resources staff (Ideally, selected students are trained to be conflict managers after all students in grades three through six have received an introduction to conflict skills resolution and cooperation) The goal of the program is to provide skilled student-to-student intervention in playground and classroom disputes A similar program exists for the middle and high school level. Students who have received the training work in pairs. This is to ensure impartiality and to serve as models of effective teamwork and cooperation. Curricula, videos and training manuals have been developed for both age groups. CCR also offers four-day training institutes for educators which cover planning and implementing programs in schools

Cooperative Discipline

published by American Guidance Service
Publishers Building
Circle Pines, MN 55014-1796

This in-service training program shows teachers how to maintain classroom order and control while helping students reach their full potential. Cooperative relationships need to be fostered among students, teachers, parents and administrators for a program to be effective. "cooperative" also refers to a specific style of teaching and parenting that develops independence, self-reliance and responsibility in children and adolescents

The Dynamics of Relationships Program

Equal Partners
14526 Banquo Terrace
Silver Spring, MD 20906
301-871-9665

This is a primary prevention program for students in grades 5-12. It teaches the basics of relationships and how to deal with the social problems and crises that develop in everyday life. It aims to help children and teens develop a strong and secure sense of self-worth, better communication and coping skills that ease interaction with family and peers, and clearer, more realistic expectations about the various roles, relationships. The course is offered as a one-credit elective, five days a week, for the entire school year and is taught by teachers who have completed a mandatory 45-hour training preparation. The teaching text is basic, focusing on discussions on topics such as self-esteem, social problems, and self-esteem

The Future of Children, School-Linked Services

Vol. 2, No. 1, Spring 1992 (available through the Family Resource Coalition)

Published by the Center for the Future of Children and the David and Lucile Packard Foundation, this collection of articles deals with schools' significantly increased role in the coordination and or provision of health and social services to children and their families

Helping Families Grow Strong: New Directions in Public Policy (Washington DC Center for the Study of Social Policy)

Especially H Weiss's article, From grass roots programs to state policy. Strategic planning and choices for family support and education initiatives Helping Families Grow Strong is a collection of papers prepared for a colloquium sponsored by the Center for the Study of Social Policy, Family Resource Coalition, The Harvard Family Research Project, and Maryland Friends of the Family

Integrating the Delivery of Services to School-aged Children at Risk: Toward a Description of American Experience and Experimentation by W.A. Morrill and M H Gerry (1991) (Washington DC US Department of Education Development)

Paper produced for the conference on at-risk children and youth sponsored by the US Department of Education and the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development

MegaSkills

by Dorothy Rich (1988 $8.95 Houghton Mifflin) This book, based on the precepts of the MegaSkills Education Center, establishes the premise that beyond the basic three-R skills children need MegaSkills. These are the values, attitudes and behaviors that are taught at home: confidence, motivation, effort, responsibility, initiative, perseverance, caring, teamwork, common sense, and problem solving. The book provides activities to teach these skills at home to children and discusses support activities

Parents Assuring Student Success: Achievement Made Easy by Learning Together

by Dr John Ban ($16.95 National Educational Services)

PASS is a curriculum that gives parents the tools they need to help their children achieve in school Activities are provided in an introductory unit and in units that promote reading, math, writing, study skills, and a sense of community

Together We Can: A Guide for Crafting a Profamily System of Education and Human Services ($3, available through the Family Resource Coalition)

by Atelia I Melaville and Martin J Blank This book was jointly developed by the US Department of Education and the US Department of Health and Human Services to help communities improve coordination of education, health, and human services for at-risk children and families

Within Our Reach: Breaking the Cycle of Disadvantage

L Schorr, with D Schorr (1988, $10, Anchor Books, available through the Family Resource Coalition)

The Family Resource Coalition is indebted to Together We Can: A Guide for Crafting a Profamily System of Education and Human Services for many of the descriptions of resources listed here.

About the Family Resource Coalition

The Family Resource Coalition is a national membership organization dedicated to communicating the premise, promise, and practice of family support.

Our network ranges from those working on the front-lines with families in local communities, to state officials grappling with how best to deliver services, to Capitol Hill public policy analysts, to academicians—all contributing their important perspectives. We maintain the nation's largest database on family support programs and build our base of information through continual collaboration with family support scholars and program providers.

Our day-to-day work includes:

*   Operating the National Resource Center for Family Support Programs and its School-Linked Services Division

*   Providing technical assistance, training, and consulting services for programs, schools, and government agencies to link family support to other services for children and families

*   Communicating family support issues and information to policymakers

*   Tracking federal, state, and local policy initiatives, and making this information available to Coalition members and others

*   Providing leadership at the national level to plan strategy and gain resources for the continued growth of the field

*   Collecting and disseminating current knowledge on program design, administration, staffing, financing, and outcomes

*   Publishing current theory on family support issues as well as materials on how to start and manage programs

*   Publishing the highly-acclaimed FRC Report, a quarterly periodical devoted to family support issues and the FRC Connection, a bimonthly networking newsletter for Coalition members, and FRC Policy Beat, an occasional newsletter devoted to family-supportive public policy issues.

*   Sponsoring national conferences and other meetings

*   Encouraging information flow, networking, and collaboration among local programs.

For more information on joining the Family Resource Coalition or to receive a catalog of our publications and services, call us at 312/ 341-0900, or write FRC, 200 S. Michigan Ave., Suite 1520, Chicago, IL 60604.