

Parent Involvement in Education

Kathleen Cotton and Karen Reed Wikelund

INTRODUCTION

It is no wonder that parent involvement with the schools has become a major educational issue in the 1980s. This is an era of increasing concern about the quality of education in this country. States are taking a greater role in monitoring and maintaining academic standards. Communities are ever more watchful of the expense of public education. Local schools are concerned about continuing to provide high-quality teaching and other services with dwindling resources. And parents want assurance that their children will receive adequate preparation to lead rewarding adult lives.

Is parent involvement a valuable, if largely untapped, resource for schools struggling to provide state-of-the-art instruction with diminishing funds--a way to instill pride and interest in schooling, increase student achievement, and enhance a sense of community and commitment? Or is it one more responsibility to add to overburdened teachers and administrators--or even a threat to the autonomy and professionalism of the schools?

This review of the literature on parent involvement examines these issues, focusing, in particular on the following five areas:

- Does parent involvement have positive effects on student achievement? If so, what type of involvement works best?
- What are the effects of parent involvement on other student outcomes, such as attitude, self-concept, classroom behavior, and attendance?
- Is parent involvement useful beyond the preschool and early elementary grades--in middle school and high school? If so, what form should it take?
- What is known about the uses of parent involvement in predominantly minority and/or lower income communities?
- What, if any, effects on children's schooling can be attributed to parent involvement in the governance of schools?

DEFINITION OF PARENT INVOLVEMENT

The term "parent involvement" is used broadly in this report. It includes several different forms of participation in education and with the schools. Parents can support their children's schooling by attending school functions and responding to school obligations (parent-teacher conferences, for example). They can become more involved in helping their children improve their schoolwork--providing encouragement, arranging for

appropriate study time and space, modeling desired behavior (such as reading for pleasure), monitoring homework, and actively tutoring their children at home.

Outside the home, parents can serve as advocates for the school. They can volunteer to help out with school activities or work in the classroom. Or they can take an active role in the governance and decision making necessary for planning, developing, and providing an education for the community's children.

THE PARENT INVOLVEMENT LITERATURE

There are literally hundreds of books, journal articles, and stand-alone reports on the subject of parents' involvement in their children's education. These writings include research reports, expert opinions, theory papers, program descriptions, and guidelines for setting up programs. A great many of these reports are informative and useful, and, because parent involvement has become a "hot topic" in the past few years, there is considerable current information.

The present report synthesizes information from fortyone documents on different aspects of parent involvement. Because several of these are review/summaries of still other documents, many additional writings are represented.

Documents were selected to reflect research on the effects of parent involvement on student achievement and other student outcomes. Twenty-five of the supporting documents are research studies, eight are reviews, and eight are program descriptions and research-based guidelines for setting up programs. All age/grade levels are represented in the research, as are specific student populations, such as the disadvantaged, special education, and limited English proficient students.

The kinds of parent involvement investigated include telephone and written home-school communications, attending school functions, parents serving as classroom volunteers, parent-teacher conferences, homework assistance/tutoring, home educational enrichment, and parent involvement in decision making and other aspects of school governance. The researchers focused on a variety of student outcome areas, including general achievement; achievement in reading, math, or other specific curricular areas; IQ scores; and an array of attitudinal and behavioral outcomes.

EFFECTS OF PARENT INVOLVEMENT ON STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT

The research overwhelmingly demonstrates that parent involvement in children's learning is positively related to achievement. Further, the research shows that the more intensively

parents are involved in their children's learning, the more beneficial are the achievement effects. This holds true for all types of parent involvement in children's learning and for all types and ages of students.

Looking more closely at the research, there are strong indications that the most effective forms of parent involvement are those which engage parents in working directly with their children on learning activities in the home. Programs which involve parents in reading with their children, supporting their work on homework assignments, or tutoring them using materials and instructions provided by teachers, show particularly impressive results.

Along similar lines, researchers have found that the more active forms of parent involvement produce greater achievement benefits than the more passive ones. That is, if parents receive phone calls, read and sign written communications from the school, and perhaps attend and listen during parent teacher conferences, greater achievement benefits accrue than would be the case with no parent involvement at all. However, considerably greater achievement benefits are noted when parent involvement is active--when parents work with their children at home, certainly, but also when they attend and actively support school activities and when they help out in classrooms or on field trips, and so on.

The research also shows that the earlier in a child's educational process parent involvement begins, the more powerful the effects will be. Educators frequently point out the critical role of the home and family environment in determining children's school success, and it appears that the earlier this influence is "harnessed," the greater the likelihood of higher student achievement. Early childhood education programs with strong parent involvement components have amply demonstrated the effectiveness of this approach.

What about orientation and training for parents who wish to become more involved in their children's learning? Those research studies which have compared parent involvement programs that include orientation/training components with those that do not indicate that providing orientation and training enhances the effectiveness of parent involvement. Research in this area indicates that parents generally want and need direction to participate with maximum effectiveness. Orientation/training takes many forms, from providing written directions with a send-home instructional packet; to providing "make-and-take" workshops where parents construct, see demonstrations of, and practice using instructional games; to programs in which parents receive extensive training and ongoing supervision by school personnel.

A word of caution about training activities for parents: While research indicates that orientation/training activities are beneficial, those researchers who have looked at the extent of training have found that a little is better than a lot. That is, programs with extensive parent training components do not produce higher student achievement than those with only basic training, and they sometimes experience considerable attrition--

presumably because their time and effort requirements overtax the willingness of parents to stay involved.

Researchers have also found that the schools with the most successful parent involvement programs are those which offer a variety of ways parents can participate. Recognizing that parents differ greatly in their willingness, ability, and available time for involvement in school activities, these schools provide a continuum of options for parent participation.

THE EFFECTS OF PARENT INVOLVEMENT ON STUDENT ATTITUDE AND BEHAVIOR

Sixteen of the documents on which this report is based address the relationship between parent involvement and achievement and then also look at the effects of parent involvement on student outcomes other than achievement. These include attitude toward school or toward particular subject areas, self-concept, classroom behavior, time spent on homework, expectations for one's future, absenteeism, motivation, and retention.

While not as extensively researched as the parent involvement-student achievement relationship, the relationship between parent involvement and these affective outcomes appears to be both strong and positive. All the research studies which address these areas found that parent involvement has positive effects on student attitudes and social behavior.

As might be expected, the pattern of parent involvement shown to confer the most positive effects on students' achievement is also the most beneficial with respect to these other student outcomes. In general, active parent involvement is more beneficial than passive involvement, but passive forms of involvement are better than no involvement at all. As for which specific kinds of involvement in children's learning have the greatest affective benefits, no clear answer emerges from the research. Whereas direct parent involvement in instruction seems to be the single most powerful approach for fostering achievement benefits, all of the active forms of parent involvement seem more or less equally effective in bringing about improvements in students' attitudes and behavior.

Although the main focus of this report is the effects of parent involvement on student outcomes, it is certainly worth noting that research reveals many benefits for school systems and for parents themselves when parents become involved in their children's learning. School personnel benefit from the improved rapport that generally accompanies increased parent involvement. This rapport is often expressed in parents' increased willingness to support schools with their labor and resources during fundraising activities or special projects. And certainly, the many ways in which parent involvement benefits students' achievement, attitudes, and behavior have a positive impact on school staff.

The research also reveals that improved parent attitudes toward the school and improved parent selfconcepts characteristically result when parents become involved in their

children's learning. Parents often begin their participation doubting that their involvement can make much difference, and they are generally very gratified to discover what an important contribution they are able to make. In this connection, it is important for school people and parents to be aware that parent involvement supports students' learning, behavior, and attitudes regardless of factors such as parents' income, educational level, and whether or not parents are employed. That is, the involvement of parents who are well-educated, well-todo, or have larger amounts of time to be involved has not been shown to be more beneficial than the involvement of less-advantaged parents. All parent involvement works and works well.

PARENT INVOLVEMENT AT THE MIDDLE SCHOOL AND SECONDARY LEVELS

There is a much higher incidence of parent involvement at the preschool level and in the primary grades than at the middle school or secondary level, and, consequently, the majority of research on parent involvement has been conducted with young children and their families. Indeed, just a few years ago, research on parent involvement in the education of older students was too limited to permit drawing any conclusions about its effectiveness.

In recent years, however, more research has been conducted with middle school and secondary students and their families. This research shows that parent involvement remains very beneficial in promoting positive achievement and affective outcomes with these older students.

Researchers have identified various differences in the incidence and types of parent involvement as students move through the upper elementary and secondary grades. They point out that parents generally become less involved as their children grow older for many reasons: schools are bigger and farther from home, the curriculum is more sophisticated, each student has several teachers, parents of older students are more likely to be employed, and students are beginning to establish some sense of separation and independence from their parents. For these reasons, the kinds of parent involvement engaged in by parents of younger children are no longer relevant or useful.

The research on the effectiveness of parent involvement with older students, therefore, often focuses on different forms of participation--e.g., parents monitoring homework, helping students make postsecondary plans and select courses which support these plans, parent-school agreements on rewards for achievement and behavioral improvements--as well as some of the "standby" functions, such as regular homeschool communication about students' progress and parent attendance at school-sponsored activities.

Clearly, parent involvement is effective in fostering achievement and affective gains at all levels, and schools are encouraged to engage and maintain this involvement throughout the middle school and secondary years.

THE ROLE OF PARENT INVOLVEMENT

WITH DISADVANTAGED STUDENTS

Thus far, this report has focused on the effects of parent involvement on achievement and other outcomes for students in general. But what about specific populations of students, particularly those whose socioeconomic status puts them at an educational disadvantage as compared with their more fortunate peers?

The nature of the parent involvement research base makes this question easier to address than it might be if it were necessary to mount all-new research efforts with disadvantaged populations. As it is, much of the general parent involvement research has been conducted with low-income, often black or Hispanic families. Sometimes this has occurred because both the parent involvement activities and the evaluations of them have been mandated as part of government-funded programs for disadvantaged children. In other cases, educators sensed the potential of parent involvement programs in poor neighborhoods, set these up, and then compared outcomes with those from other schools which are demographically similar.

The first thing researchers discovered is that minority or low-income parents are often underrepresented among the ranks of parents involved with the schools. There are numerous reasons for this: lack of time or energy (due to long hours of heavy physical labor, for example), embarrassment or shyness about one's own educational level or linguistic abilities, lack of understanding or information about the structure of the school and accepted communication channels, perceived lack of welcome by teachers and administrators, and teachers and administrators' assumptions of parents' disinterest or inability to help with children's schooling.

Perhaps one of the most important findings of the research, however, is that parents of disadvantaged and minority children can and do make a positive contribution to their children's achievement in school if they receive adequate training and encouragement in the types of parent involvement that can make a difference. Even more significant, the research dispels a popular myth by revealing, as noted above, that parents can make a difference regardless of their own levels of education. Indeed, disadvantaged children have the most to gain from parent involvement programs.

Because of the special problems and the potential associated with minority and disadvantaged parent involvement, care must be taken to emphasize the concept of parents as partners of the school. Too often, because of the discontinuities between teachers/administrators and the communities in which their schools are located, school personnel tend to view the parents and surrounding community as needing to change and having little to offer. This "deficit model," as it has been called, is clearly detrimental to the development of positive attitudes about education and good working relationships between the community and the school. The guidelines offered at the end of this report

can help schools and communities break down some of these barriers and move toward genuine working partnerships.

It is worth mentioning, in passing, that parent involvement benefits members of other special student populations as well. While the investigation leading to this report did not involve an in-depth analysis of evidence regarding these populations, the research reviewed does indicate that special education, gifted, limited English proficient, and other student groups also experience achievement and affective benefits when their parents are involved in their learning.

THE EFFECTS OF PARENT INVOLVEMENT IN SCHOOL GOVERNANCE

Turning from the matter of parent involvement in children's learning, what about the outcomes produced by parent involvement in school governance? The term "governance" here includes any activity which provides parents the opportunity to take part in decision making about school programs. This may include being a school board member, a participant on a parent advisory committee or a local school improvement council, or an active member of the PTA. Areas in which parents may be helping to make program decisions include goal setting, development and implementation of program activities, assessment, personnel decisions, and funding allocations.

This area of parent involvement is one of the most controversial. Surveys show that most parents would like to play a more active role in this type of involvement, whereas most school administrators and teachers exhibit great reluctance to encourage parents to become partners in governance.

The literature reviewed for this report indicates that although administrators agree that parents should be involved with the schools in a variety of ways and that school personnel should spend time encouraging and training parents to become involved, they disapprove of parent involvement in administrative areas such as teacher and principal selection and evaluation, and are less enthusiastic than parents regarding the utility of parent participation in other activities, such as the selection of texts and other teaching materials or setting priorities for the school budget. They also tend to feel that parents do not have enough training to make school decisions, although surveys of parents indicate that the majority of them feel they are capable of making sound decisions.

In this review, no examples were found of programs in which parent participation in decision-making roles could be directly linked to improved student achievement. The relationship between parent participation in decision making and student achievement is not nearly as extensively researched as the effects of parent involvement in students' learning. Indeed, writers on the topic indicate that it is more difficult to assess the effects of parent involvement in decision making precisely because the connection to student outcomes is more indirect.

Of the half-dozen documents which do address the connection between parent involvement in decision making and student achievement, none were able to offer evidence of a causal relationship, though some writers seem to believe that such a relationship exists.

The lack of evidence linking parent involvement in governance and student achievement should not be taken to mean that parents should not be included in some aspects of school decision making, however. Researchers and others have identified benefits other than student achievement which have been found to emerge from involving parents in governance. These include:

- The elimination of mistaken assumptions parents and school people may hold about one another's motives, attitudes, intentions and abilities
- The growth of parents' ability to serve as resources for the academic, social and psychological development of their children--with the potential for much longer-term influence (because of continued interaction with their children over time)
- The increase of parents' own skills and confidence, sometimes furthering their own educations and upgrading their jobs, thus providing improved role models for their children
- The increase in parents serving as advocates for the schools throughout the community

Research indicates that the kinds of parent involvement referenced earlier in this report--attending parent-teacher conferences and school functions, volunteering in classrooms, tutoring children at home, etc.--provide the best training ground to help prepare parents for roles in school decision making. These activities enable parents to understand something of the school's structure and its instructional programs and provide basic experience in working with school personnel. These experiences can expand parents' knowledge and increase their credibility with school staff as they move into decision-making roles.

ENGAGING MEANINGFUL PARENT

INVOLVEMENT IN THE SCHOOLS

Investigators have identified lack of planning and lack of mutual understanding as the two greatest barriers to effective parent involvement. School staff wishing to institute effective programs will need to be both open-minded and well-organized in their approach to engaging parent participation.

Research has established that the most successful parent participation efforts are those which offer parents a variety of roles in the context of a well-organized and long-lasting program. Parents will need to be able to choose from a range of activities which

accommodate different schedules, preferences, and capabilities. As part of the planning process, teachers and administrators will need to assess their own readiness for involving parents and determine how they wish to engage and utilize them.

Other guidelines include:

- Communicate to parents that their involvement and support makes a great deal of difference in their children's school performance, and that they need not be highly educated or have large amounts of free time for their involvement to be beneficial. Make this point repeatedly.
- Encourage parent involvement from the time children first enter school (or preschool, if they attend).
- Teach parents that activities such as modeling reading behavior and reading to their children increase children's interest in learning.
- Develop parent involvement programs that include a focus on parent involvement in instruction--conducting learning activities with children in the home, assisting with homework, and monitoring and encouraging the learning activities of older students.
- Provide orientation and training for parents, but remember that intensive, long-lasting training is neither necessary nor feasible.
- Make a special effort to engage the involvement of parents of disadvantaged students, who stand to benefit the most from parent participation in their learning, but whose parents are often initially reluctant to become involved.
- Continue to emphasize that parents are partners of the school and that their involvement is needed and valued.

KEY STUDIES AND REVIEWS

Armor, D.; Conry-Oseguera, P.; Cox, M.; King, N.; McDonnell, L.; Pascal, A.; Pauly, E.; and Zellman, G. Analysis of the School Preferred Reading Program in Selected Los Angeles Minority Schools. Santa Monica, CA: Rand Corporation, 1976. (ED 130 243).

Investigates the factors associated with high and low reading achievement in twenty elementary schools with a high proportion of poor minority students. Several elements associated with achievement gains were identified, including high levels of contact between parents and school staff.

Becher, R. M. Parent Involvement: A Review of Research and Principles of Successful Practice. Urbana, IL: ERIC Clearinghouse on Elementary and Early Childhood Education, 1984. (ED 247 032).

Reviews research on parent involvement and presents extensive information on the elements of successful parent involvement programs. Identifies research findings regarding the role of the family in determining children's abilities and achievement, the

effects of parent education programs on student outcomes, parental practices which promote reading success, and the role and potential of parent involvement in enhancing school-family relations.

Coleman, J. B., and Hoffer, T. *Public and Private High Schools: The Impact of Communities*. New York: Basic Books, Inc., 1987.

Compares the reading and math achievement of low-income black and Hispanic students in Catholic high schools with the achievement of such students in public high schools. Attributes the superior performance of Catholic school students to the greater involvement of families and communities in these schools.

Collins, C. H.; Moles, O. C.; and Cross, M. *The HomeSchool Connection: Selected Partnership Programs in Large Cities*. Boston, MA: Institute for Responsive Education, 1982.

Describes 28 parent involvement programs in large American cities and identifies elements which appear responsible for their success. Positive results of involving parents in their children's schooling include improved achievement, reduced absenteeism, improved behavior, and restored confidence among parents in their children's schooling.

Cotton, K., and Savard, W. G. *Parent Involvement in Instruction, K-12: Research Synthesis*. Portland, OR: Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory, 1982. (ED 235 397).

Reviews 18 studies on the effects of parent involvement in instruction on the achievement, attitudes, and behavior of elementary and secondary students. Found such involvement beneficial, especially when parents receive orientation and training for helping their children.

Dornbusch, S. M., and Ritter, P. L. "Parents of High School Students: A Neglected Resource." *Educational Horizons* 66(1988): 75-77.

Reports the results of a survey concerning the relationship between parent involvement and student achievement in six San Francisco Bay Area high schools. Students whose parents attended school events and engaged in contacts with teachers had higher achievement than those whose parents were minimally involved or uninvolved.

Fehrmann, P. G.; Keith, T. Z.; and Reiners, T. M. "Home Influence on School Learning: Direct and Indirect Effects of Parental Involvement on High School Grades." *Journal of Educational Research* 80(1987): 330-336.

Examines the effects of parental influence on time spent by high school students doing homework and time spent watching television. The sample consisted of 28,051 high school seniors from the High School and Beyond longitudinal study. Data from the HSB

questionnaire were analyzed. Increased parent involvement was positively related to students' time spent on homework and on their grades.

Gillman, R. M.; Schooley, D. E.; and Novak, P. D. The Effects of Parental Involvement on Student Achievement in Three Michigan Performance Contracting Programs. Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the American Educational Research Association, April 1977. (ED 144 007).

Compares three Michigan elementary school districts involved in state-funded programs to improve reading achievement. The two districts with minimal parent involvement had higher achievement than schools without such involvement, and the district with intensive parent involvement showed the largest achievement gains.

Goodson, B. D., and Hess, R. D. Parents as Teachers of Young Children: An Evaluative Review of Some Contemporary Concepts and Programs. Washington, DC: Bureau of Educational Personnel Development, DHEW, May 1975. (ED 136 967).

Examines evaluations of 29 preschool programs to determine relationships between different approaches to parent training and later student achievement. All approaches were associated with gains in children's IQ scores and achievement and with improvements in parents' teaching behaviors.

Henderson, A. The Evidence Continues to Grow: Parent Involvement Improves Student Achievement--An Annotated Bibliography. Columbia, MD: National Committee for Citizens in Education, 1987.

Reviews 49 studies of parent involvement in children's learning at home, in the instructional program at school, and in supporting the school in general. Concludes that all forms of parent involvement have positive effects on student achievement.

Herman, J. L., and Yeh, J. P. "Some Effects of Parent Involvement in Schools." *The Urban Review* 15(1983): 11-17.

Investigates the effects of parent involvement on the achievement of second and third graders in 250 California elementary schools. Children of involved parents showed significantly higher achievement than other students.

Leler, H. "Parent Education and Involvement in Relation to the Schools and to Parents of School-Aged Children." In *Parent Education and Public Policy*, edited by R. Haskins and D. Addams. Norwood, NJ: ALEX Publishing Co., 1983.

Reviews 48 studies of educational programs with significant parent involvement components. Forms of parent involvement strongly associated with achievement gains included parents helping their children at home after training, tutoring students, and helping in classrooms.

Mucha, L. Attitudes and Achievement Effects of Mathematics Homework Games on Second Grade Students and Their Parents. May 1987. (ED 283 698).

Examines the effects of mathematics homework games involving parent participation on the mathematics achievement and attitudes of second graders. Posttests indicated positive effects of the home activities on achievement and attitudes (toward math, toward self and toward other game players).

Sattes, B. Parent Involvement: A Review of the Literature. Charleston, WV: Appalachia Educational Laboratory, November 1985.

Reviews literature on parent involvement in the education of students at all levels. The review cites research indicating beneficial effects of parent involvement on student achievement, attendance, motivation, and behavior. Offers research-based guidelines for engaging parent involvement in schools.

Tangri, S., and Moles, O. "Parents and the Community." In *Educators' Handbook: A Research Perspective*, edited by V. Richardson-Koehler. New York/London: Longman Press, 1987.

Reviews research on the effects of different kinds of parent involvement on student outcomes. Achievement and affective benefits (attendance, behavior, attitudes) are associated with: parents serving as paid classroom aides, parents working as volunteers, home-school communications, phone contacts, home visits, parent-teacher conferences, homework assistance, home tutoring, and home educational environment. Research is inconclusive about the effects on student achievement of parent involvement in decision making.

Walberg, H. J.; Bole, R. E.; and Waxman, H. C. "School-Based Family Socialization and Reading Achievement in the Inner City." *Psychology in the Schools* 17(1980): 509-514.

Investigates the effects on student achievement of parent support of learning activities. Parents of students in grades 1-6 in 41 classes in Chicago agreed to cooperate with teachers in supporting their children's learning activities. Children of involved parents made significantly greater academic gains than children of noninvolved parents.

Walson, T.; Brown, M.; and Swick, K. J. "The Relationship of Parents' Support to Children's School Achievement." *Child Welfare* 62(1983): 175-180.

Offers outcomes of a study of the relationships among education, home support, neighborhood support, and children's achievement. Questionnaires completed by the parents of 362 first graders were analyzed in relation to children's achievement test scores. The children of actively supportive parents scored highest, followed by the children of passively involved parents, and then the children of noninvolved parents.

Willis, C. L. "Strengthening the Bonds Between the School and the Community." *Journal of Educational Public Relations* 9(1987): 28-31.

Cites attributes among elementary schools selected as exemplary through the Elementary School Recognition Program in 1985-86. Elements cited relate to the schools' connections with parents and community members.

OTHER REFERENCES

Boulder Valley School District. *A Personalized Kindergarten Program with Supplementary Parent Involvement: Final Report*. Boulder Valley, CO: Bureau of Elementary and Secondary Education, 1975. (ED 116 791).

Studies the effects of providing individualized inschool instruction to developmentally delayed kindergarten children and the effects of providing such instruction plus parent-delivered home activities. Children whose parents conducted activities with them at home significantly outperformed those receiving only in-school instruction.

Cervone, B. T., and O'Leary, K. "A Conceptual Framework for Parent Involvement." *Educational Leadership* 40(1982): 48-49.

Identifies a continuum for parent involvement extending from passive, marginally involved, to active and deeply involved. Categories identified on the continuum include: Reporting Progress, Special Events, Parent Education, and Parents Teaching.

Chavkin, N. F., and Williams, D. L., Jr. "Enhancing Parent Involvement." *Education and Urban Society* 19(1987): 164-184.

Reports the results of a survey of parents and educators in six southern states on parent involvement. Respondents provided views on parent involvement in general, in decision making, parent involvement roles, and parent involvement activities.

Clarke-Stewart, K. A. "Exploring the Assumptions of Parent Education. In *Parent Education and Public Policy*, edited by R. Haskins and D. Addams. Norwood, NJ: ABLEX Publishing Co., 1983.

Looks at the literature on parent education (training parents to support their children's learning) in order to confirm or challenge several assumptions about the value of parent education programs. Claims that while parent education appears to benefit students, many questions remain unanswered--e.g., which kinds of programs work best.

Comer, J. P. "Is 'Parenting' Essential to Good Teaching?" *NEA Today* 6(1988): 34-40.

Discusses parent involvement in the context of social changes in the past 40 years. Discusses projects undertaken in New Haven, Connecticut elementary schools, in which parent involvement activities were largely responsible for dramatic improvements in student achievement. Students in these schools were 99 percent black and from low-income families.

. "Parent Participation in the Schools." *Phi Delta Kappan* 67(1986): 442-446.

Describes the changing relationships between schools and communities and discusses the critical role of parent involvement in education. Presents detail on parent involvement programs in New Haven, Connecticut elementary schools--programs which resulted in the schools' moving from being extremely low achieving to universally high achieving.

, et al. *Yale Child Study Center School Development Program: Developmental History and Long Term Effects*. New Haven, CT: Yale University, Sept. 1986. (ED 283 910).

Reviews the successes of the SDP over the period 1969-1984. Focuses on the program's major elements, which include (1) the mental health team, which coordinates the other three, (2) the school governance and management body, (3) the parent involvement program, and (4) the curriculum and staff development program.

Edge, D.; Strenesky, B. J.; McLoughlin, J. A.; and Edge, S. M. "Involving Parents and Families in the Educational Process." In *Organizational Psychology in the Schools: A Handbook for Professionals*, edited by C. A. Maher, R. J. Illback, and J. E. Zins. Springfield, IL: Charles C. Thomas, 1984.

Describes parent involvement models and provides detail on Project ENRICH in the state of Kentucky, which includes parent involvement in decision making. Offers guidelines for developing parent involvement programs.

Epstein, J. L. "Home and School Connections in Schools of the Future: Implications of Research on Parent Involvement." *Peabody Journal of Education* 62(1985): 18-41.

Presents findings from research on the effects of parent involvement programs on student attitude, achievement, and other outcomes. Findings from the author's own research efforts are highlighted. The article includes a discussion of the role of school and home computers in students' education.

. "Parent Involvement: What Research Says to Administrators." *Education and Urban Society* 19(1987): 119-136.

Provides results of extensive surveys on parent involvement in the state of Maryland. Surveyed were 3,700 first, third, and fifth grade teachers and principals in 600 elementary schools, and 1,200 parents. Recommendations are offered to school administrators based on findings.

Gordon, I. "The Effects of Parent Involvement on Schooling." In *Partners: Parents and Schools*, edited by R. S. Brandt. Alexandria, VA: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development, 1979.

Describes four models of parent-school-community relations and cites research on the long-term effects of parent involvement. The parent impact model is associated with positive changes in student achievement.

Harris, L.; Kagay, M.; and Ross, J. *The Metropolitan Life Survey of the American Teacher, 1987: Strengthening Links Between Home and School*. New York: Louis Harris and Associates, 1987.

Presents survey results on home-school relationships and addresses such topics as barriers to greater homeschool contact, levels of desired and actual contact, and ways to establish stronger home-school linkages.

Henderson, A. T.; Marburger, C. T.; and Ooms, T. "Developing a Family-School Partnership in Every School." In *Beyond the Bake Sale: An Educators Guide to Working With Parents*. Columbia, MD: National Committee for Citizens in Education, 1986.

Provides a listing of basic principles for effective family-school relationships and a discussion of the changing nature of parent involvement as children move through the different grade levels.

Keith, T. Z., et al. "Parent Involvement, Homework, and TV Time: Direct and Indirect Effects on Achievement." *Journal of Educational Psychology* 78(1986): 373-380.

Reports the findings of a study on the relationship of several variables to student achievement. Parent involvement was found to affect achievement indirectly through parents' influence on the time students spend on homework.

Leitch, M. L., and Tangri, S. S. "Barriers to HomeSchool Collaboration." *Educational Horizons* 66(1988): 70-74.

Reports the results of interviews conducted with junior high school language arts and mathematics teachers and with 60 parents regarding barriers to effective parent involvement. Lack of planning and lack of mutual understanding between teachers and parents appeared to be the greater barriers to collaboration.

Moles, O. C. "Synthesis of Recent Research on Parent Participation in Children's Education." *Educational Leadership* 40(1982): 44-47.

Reviews research on parent involvement and provides findings regarding the effects of parent involvement on achievement and attitudes, presents information on the forms parent involvement takes, identifies barriers to home-school collaboration, and presents

effective teacher practices for engaging participation. Research overwhelmingly supports parent involvement in instruction.

National Congress of Parents and Teachers. *Parent Involvement: What Your PTA Can Do*. Chicago, IL: NCPT, 1986.

Cites research on the effects of parent involvement, describes the different forms parent involvement may take, and offers guidelines for engaging parent participation in different aspects of schooling.

Revicki, D. A. *The Relationship Among Socioeconomic Status, Home Environment, Parent Involvement, Child Self-Concept, and Child Achievement*. Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina, March 1981. (ED 206 645).

Examines the relationship among various home background variables and student outcomes, using data from two Parent Education Follow Through Programs on 321 second graders. Active parent involvement was related to increases in the achievement performance and self-concepts of participating children.

Southwest Educational Development Laboratory. *A Regional Directory for Training Teachers and Administrators in Parent Involvement in Education*. Austin, TX: SEDL, 1987.

Offers, in loose-leaf format, an array of parent involvement resources, including information on training programs, parent involvement programs, networks, organizations, literature, training aids, and other resources. While some of the material relates to parent involvement activities and resources in the Southwest region, much of it is applicable to any area.

Swap, S. M. *Enhancing Parent Involvement in Schools*. New York: Teachers College Press, 1987.

Provides in-depth, research-based information on ways to engage and maintain meaningful parent involvement in children's learning and school governance. Provides sample materials and activities for improving parentschool communications.

Tennies, R. H. "A Parent Involvement Program Including Communication to Parents Integrated with a Parent Education Program and Its Effect on Academic Achievement, Classroom Conduct, Study Habits, and Attitudes." *Community Education Research Digest* 1(1986): 7-13.

Investigates the effects of implementing a parent involvement activity on achievement and other outcomes of students in grades 6-12. A control group and two groups with different levels of parent involvement were compared. Children of involved parents had higher GPAs than controls. There were no significant differences on other variables.

Vinograd-Bausell, C. R., and Bausell, R. B. "Home Teaching of Word Recognition Skills." *Journal of Research and Development in Education* 20(1987): 57-65.

Presents results of a study in which 195 parents taught their first graders word recognition skills at home, using materials provided by the school. These students significantly outperformed controls. The article also presents findings from 20 studies on home tutoring. Home tutoring program formats included: (1) professionally supervised tutoring, (2) professionally administered training, (3) televised instruction, and (4) materials only (like the format of the study). All formats were found to be useful, with the materials only format viewed as having the widest feasibility.

Yap, K. O. Improving Chapter I through Parents: A Family Goal Program. Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the American Educational Research Association, Washington, DC, April 20-24, 1987. (ED 285 895).

Compares the reading achievement scores and reading attitudes of elementary students whose parents worked with them in a parent involvement program to the scores of nonparticipants. Results somewhat favored experimental children. Control children and parents were found to have engaged in activities very similar to those of experimental families.

This publication is based on work sponsored wholly, or in part, by the Office of Educational Research and Improvement (OERI), U.S. Department of Education, under Contract Number 400-86-0006. The content of this publication does not necessarily reflect the views of OERI, the Department, or any other agency of the U.S. Government.

May 1989

This document's URL is:

 <http://www.nwrel.org/scpd/sirs/3/cu6.html>

Parent involvement in education aids kids' social functioning. In particular, kids with involved parents have better peer interactions than kids with uninvolved parents. Their social skills also seem to be more advanced. Notably, advanced social skills, in turn, to lead to better academic outcomes. How to Be More Involved in Your Kids' Education. So now that we've established how far-reaching involvement in your child's education is, the next question is "how can parents be MORE involved?" This can be a big challenge for the parents of tweens and teens, as kids at this time are wanting more